

WOMEN • IN
• ROMAN •
REPUBLICAN
• DRAMA •

EDITED BY DOROTA DUTSCH,
SHARON L. JAMES, AND DAVID KONSTAN



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Women in Roman Republican Drama

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WOMEN IN ROMAN REPUBLICAN DRAMA

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DOROTA DUTSCH
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Women in Roman Republican Drama

Introduction

DOROTA DUTSCH, SHARON L. JAMES, and
DAVID KONSTAN

This is an exciting time for students, teachers, and scholars of Roman drama. Studies of this relatively neglected material are virtually exploding, with an astonishing range of topics, concerns, and approaches.¹ New texts and commentaries are being issued at a furious rate, with more coming all the time.² Controversies over the size and makeup of the viewing audiences in theaters at Rome have stirred up significant and productive work, much of it still ongoing.³ Long-standing scholarly knowledge and assumptions about the conditions and ancient reception of the *palliata* (“comedy in Greek dress,” better known as Roman comedy) have been swept away, particularly by the works of Sander Goldberg (1998) and C. W. Marshall (2006). Everything we used to think we knew about the viewing audiences (i.e., that they could be quite large) was wrong, and much that we thought we could never know (e.g., about how acting troupes operated) has been brought to light by these two studies, which have jointly kicked off a growing wave of attention to performance of drama in ancient Rome.⁴

Much work has also been coming out on the engagement of Roman drama with its social, cultural, political, even military contexts, as seen in the works of McCarthy (2003), Matthew Leigh (2004), A. J. Boyle (2006), Dorota Dutsch (2008), Roberta Stewart (2012), as well as Amy Richlin (2013, 2014).⁵ Philological studies, such as those of W. D. C. de Melo (2007) and Michael Fontaine (2010), have not been lacking.⁶ It is thus easier now to study Roman drama than ever before.

Much of the recent wave of study in the field, however, has been aimed at specialists and joins a general concern with what Roman drama meant in its time—a scholarly concern not likely to be resolved in the near future. Resources to assist students, both graduate and undergraduate, and teachers have been

fewer.⁷ Particularly lacking are studies that help to bring out the kinds of issues that tend to be of interest to contemporary students; likewise absent are resources for scholars in other fields who are seeking a foothold in Rome for studies of, for example, Renaissance drama. No single volume can meet both sets of needs and interests, but we propose to offer studies that will ideally be useful to both groups, as the subject of women (both on and off the stage) remains an abiding concern on campuses and in private studies. The purpose of the present volume, then, is to begin to address these questions by discussing the portrayal of female characters in the drama of the Roman Republic, and in some of its later adaptations.

Drama and Rome

The introduction of Latin drama at the *ludi Romani* in 240 BCE was no doubt a political decision, as were later resolutions to stage plays at other festivals.⁸ Staging plays in Latin allowed drama to reach audiences unfamiliar with Greek—including most Roman women—and to convey meanings absent from the Greek intertexts.⁹ Elected officials, most often *aediles*, were in charge of finding venues and purchasing scripts from playwrights.¹⁰ While it is unclear precisely how the officials benefited from this opportunity to showcase their taste in entertainment and organizing skills, there is little doubt that they made informed choices and were interested in the plays' success as well as in their message, as vehicles for given values and ideological commitments.¹¹ For this reason too, we may assume that Roman plays in translation reflect procedures and practices that made them (Greek intertexts notwithstanding) a part of Roman social discourse. This process of appropriation gave rise to two new genres set explicitly in Rome: while mythological tragedy (*fabula crepidata*) and comedy in Greek costume (*fabula palliata*) adapted Greek plots, historical tragedy (*praetexta*) and comedy in Roman costume (*togata*) were explicitly set in Roman Italy. Although only the *palliata* survives from the Republican period as a substantial corpus (twenty plays plus a substantial fragment by Plautus and six plays by Terence), other genres too, including those we know only in fragments, allow us a glimpse of Roman attitudes toward gender and hints at how these works criticized, commented on, reflected, or otherwise engaged with everyday practice.

All contributors here operate on the principle that Roman drama was staged for Romans and thus reflected Roman interests and perspectives. Roman drama, like much of Roman literature, developed against the background of Greek literary models. The Greek cultural, literary, and theatrical backgrounds and settings of many of these materials do not mean that the plays were received by Roman audiences as alien: "the same stories spoke to citizens of both cultures" (Konstan 1983,

23).¹² The performance contexts were thoroughly Roman: drama at Rome was a cultural practice located within Roman festivals, sponsored by Roman officials, played by Roman actors, and enjoyed by Roman audiences. This subject has been much studied for Roman comedy,¹³ but recent monographs on Roman tragedy have likewise called attention to ways in which this genre was implicated in the life of the city and its evolving institutions (Boyle 2006) and to Roman tragedy's sophisticated and self-conscious relationship with Greek materials (Erasmio 2004).¹⁴

Questions about gender, specifically about women, have played hardly any role in discussions of the Romanness of Roman drama, although they are without doubt an integral part of the cultural and historical background Roman theater.¹⁵ Latin plays were written for audiences whose gender perspectives and expectations were shaped by life in Rome and its environs, audiences that included female citizens and female slaves (*Poen.* 32 and 28). There is indeed little doubt that the specific gender relations of Rome to some extent, at least, shaped the Latin scripts. The *palliata* playfully reflected the speech mannerisms of Roman women.¹⁶ The figures of the dowered wife and the prostitute are particularly prominent in the Roman plays, so far as the fragments of Greek comedy permit us to judge by way of comparison.¹⁷ Roman tragedy shows a strong interest in women and their virtues.¹⁸ The *praetexta*, or historical tragedy, in particular staged Roman ideals of both masculinity (e.g., Decius Mus) and femininity (e.g., Lucretia),¹⁹ while the *togata* (comedy transposed to small-town Roman settings) was designed to raise familiar issues about women and their relationships with men—issues and problems that arose in the lives of the viewers.²⁰ These issues remained real, and familiar, for centuries, and the European theatrical traditions that were modeled on Roman drama were both popular entertainment and reflections of continuing personal and social issues in family and daily life.

Questions of gender are vital, then, to current efforts to read drama as a part of the cultural and political landscape of Rome, and we hope this volume will contribute to that ongoing effort. Furthermore, it is representations of women that have most engaged modern heirs of Roman drama through translation, adaptation, and pastiche. Playwrights from Shakespeare to Steven Sondheim have created new gendered identities in dialogue with Roman rather than Greek models. Attention to female characters in the reception of Roman comedy is thus a design feature of this volume.

The Essays

In theory, a study of women in Roman drama should encompass representations of female identities from the earliest fragments of Livius Andronicus to Senecan

tragedy. We have chosen to confine our range to Republican drama, which is to say, mainly comedy, rather than aim for an exhaustive scope. Senecan tragedy, composed in the radically different social conditions of the Roman Empire, could not speak to broad Roman audiences about their everyday lives, and that particular function of Roman drama is a major impetus for this collection.²¹ The modern reception of Roman tragedy is a field of its own, and including it would overtax even the limited treatment of the influence of Roman comedy that has been possible in this volume.²² Finally, it is impossible to provide comprehensive coverage of the extant plays and fragments of Roman Republican drama: four of Terence's six plays are studied here (*Andria*, *Eunuchus*, *Hecyra*, and *HT*) and eight of Plautus's twenty (*Amphitruo*, *Bacchides*, *Casina*, *Epidicus*, *Mostellaria*, *Persa*, *Stichus*, *Truculentus*). This mix joins some of the most commonly studied plays with others that are read less frequently. Much more remains to be said on the subject of women in Republican Roman drama. We trust that this volume will provide a start on that conversation, as the essays herein reach out to much previous scholarship while looking forward to new subjects and interests.

The essays here fall into three sections, titled Females in Performance, Women in Roman Drama and Society, and Receptions. The three essays in part 1 focus on the staging of women, beginning with Dorota Dutsch's study of the aesthetics of impersonation, that is, the significance of male actors performing female roles, and the way the scripts instruct viewers both to look at the male actor and to construct imaginatively a female body. Amy Richlin likewise considers comic performance as a transaction involving both actors and audience, including women, focusing on the institution of slavery and its implications for the portrayal of women, particularly prostitutes. She also discusses the roles of female slaves, who usually receive little attention in scholarship. Timothy Moore's formal analysis of the musical patterns in Terence's *Mother-in-Law* reminds us that a distinctively Roman feature of the *palliata* is its musicality, which communicated crucial information about characters to the viewers. Women play important roles in comedies with Greek settings (as they do in mythological tragedy); lines recited by female characters in both Plautus and Terence, Moore points out, were musically important, often performed to musical accompaniment. In fact, some of the *palliata*'s most complex songs belong to female characters. The chapter focuses on the interpretation of Terence's *Mother-in-Law*, a play whose unusual musical patterns, as Moore demonstrates, underscore the prominence of its female characters.

Part 2 is devoted to Roman women as depicted within the plays and genres, with particular attention to the relationship of these dramatic women to the societies in which the plays were staged. This section inevitably focuses more on women in the surprising world of the *palliata*, which offers the greatest bulk of the

extant evidence for women in Roman Republican drama. Elaine Fantham considers the issue of women's power and demonstrates that what puts female characters in control is the male characters' lack of control over their desires. Sharon James, in turn, focuses on the manipulation of language by citizen mothers, identifying the circumstances under which women alternately adapt or avoid the deferential and affectionate expressions that are considered markers of female speech, and showing that the use of these markers often correlates with anxiety about daughters. Anne Feltovich discusses the relationships between pairs of sisters and shows the need for cooperation among women as they seek to control their lives and their own bodies in a world marked by male domination. The last two chapters discuss plays preserved only in fragments: tragedy, both mythological (*crepidata*) and historical (*praetexta*), and comedy set in Roman Italy (*fabula togata*), calling attention to ways in which female characters are represented. The *togata*, as Jarrett Welsh demonstrates, shows a greater range of independence in female characters than is witnessed in the *palliata*. If the married women of the *togata* have less influence and money than do the dowered wives of the *palliata*, the younger women appear to have much more freedom and self-determination than is even dreamed of for the citizen daughters of Roman comedy, and the lives of women depicted in the genre are considerably more varied. Gesine Manuwald's discussion of fragments of Roman tragedy reveals a predilection for portraying powerful women but also an emphasis on virtues, such as self-esteem or devotion to family, which Roman audiences would have expected and respected in women.

Part 3 reminds us that the women of Roman Republican drama lived on for centuries, as European theater shows, in works by both famous and lesser-known dramatists. Valeria Cinaglia and David Konstan discuss Machiavelli's transformation of Plautus's plot types into a story about seduction and extramarital love in the *Mandragola*. Here Livy's Lucretia emerges as a Boccaccian heroine whose willingness to conduct an affair mocks Roman comedy's obsession with chastity. Ariana Traill applies L. G. Clubb's concept of the theatergram to analyze the influence of Roman dramatic texts on female characters in Shakespeare. Traill focuses in particular on the theatergrams connected with wives and courtesans, or *meretrices*, a stock type in Roman comedy that had no place on Shakespeare's stage but left a trace in his drama. Finally, Rodrigo Gonçalves explores an eighteenth-century adaptation of the *Amphitruo* by Antônio José da Silva, composed in Portugal under the brutal Inquisition. This comic puppet opera introduces into the Plautine plot the figure of the goddess Juno as a jealous wife who comes down to earth to take revenge on her husband. Only at the last moment does the goddess save the play from veering off into tragedy. This little-known play, part of an Iberian tradition also little known among classicists, draws on the male-female

relations of Roman comedy to take up life-and-death political issues of its own time, relating to problems of authority and absolute power that operates arbitrarily, without concern for fairness. In this respect, Silva's play draws on the male-female issues of Roman drama to engage crucial national and international issues of religion, power, and justice.

We hope that these essays will both join the ongoing wave of scholarship on Roman drama and offer resources to students and teachers in a wide range of courses, as well as bring attention generally to the crucial roles of women on the Roman stage.

NOTES

1. Consider these diverse monographs on Roman drama published in English in only the last few years: Fortson (2008) uses insights from comparative phonology to recover the prosody of Plautine Latin; Sharrock (2009) offers a sophisticated literary analysis of the humor of Roman comedy; Fontaine (2010) deploys traditional philological methods to recover verbal puns; Karakasis (2005) studies language in Terence. Manuwald (2011) analyses all theatrical genres in light of the culture of the Roman Republic; Moore (2012a) offers groundbreaking insights into music of Roman comedy; Stewart (2012) analyzes echoes of the Roman discourse of slavery in Plautus.

2. See, e.g., Richlin's modernizing translations of Plautus (2005); Henderson's translation and commentary on *Asinaria* (2006); Christenson's translations of selected plays by Plautus and Terence (2010) and most plays by Plautus (2013); de Melo's new Loeb translations of all plays by Plautus (2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2012, 2013); Brown's translations of Terence (2006); Maltby's translation and commentary on *Phormio* (2012); and Goldberg's commentary on *Hecyra* (2013). Terence's illustrated manuscripts have also been receiving attention; see Wright 2006, reconstructing a lost fifth-century original and the facsimile of the Bodleian Terence (MS. Auct. F.2.13) produced by Muir, Turner, and Kennedy (2012). This list could be extended. The Sarsina texts continue to appear, along with the companion collections of essays; see also the ScriptOralia series.

3. Goldberg 1998; Marshall 2006; Fontaine 2010, 2011; with Richlin 2014. Points about the size and composition of the audience for Roman comedy (the *palliata*) also hold true for the audiences of all other theatrical presentations in Rome.

4. Again, although these two studies focus on Roman comedy, their results still hold true for other forms of staged drama in Rome. The NEH 2012 Summer Institute, "Roman Comedy in Performance," offered resources for those hoping to teach aspects of both ancient and modern performance.

5. Boyle (2006, 2–16) stresses the theatricality of public life in Rome, with its funerals and triumphal processions, and insists on the local traditions' influence on drama. Erasmo examines the Romanness of Roman drama from the point of view of performance criticism, arguing that the tragedians adapted Greek scripts to their Roman contexts (2004, 5–8).

Dupont and Letessier (2011) and Faure-Ribreau (2012) argue that Roman drama, particularly comic plays, are entertainment unconcerned with social and political life.

6. Other titles could be added, particularly of the companion/handbook variety (e.g., Augoustakis and Traill's *Blackwell Companion to Terence* [2013]; Amy Richlin's, "Talking to Slaves in the Plautine Audience" [2014]; Martin Dinter's *Cambridge Companion to Roman Comedy* [forthcoming]). More works are also in progress: Ruth Caston, *Terence's Comic Art*; Sharon L. James, *Women in Greek and Roman New Comedy*.

7. Though see the Bolchazy-Carducci readers for Plautus (Henderson 2009) and Terence (Anderson 2009), the Duckworth reader in Roman drama (Manuwald 2010), and the useful introduction to Roman theater by Timothy Moore (2012b).

8. See Gruen 1990, 122–23; Manuwald 2011, 49–50.

9. Although we have no reliable data on women's education in the third and second centuries, it is reasonable to assume that knowledge of Greek among Roman women (other than Greek-educated prostitutes) was limited. Evidence from Terence seems to corroborate this assumption: see Maltby 1985, 115–16.

10. See Brown 2002.

11. On the debates about the magistrates' motivation, see Manuwald 2011, 49–54, and her references, especially 50nn28 and 29.

12. This tradition of distinguishing between Greek and Roman elements goes back to Leo 1913 and his work on Attic elements in Plautus, in response to which Fraenkel (1922, 1960, 2006) wrote about Plautine, i.e., Roman, elements splashed onto the Greek canvas. For a concise summary of approaches to Roman drama's debt to Greece, see Manuwald 2011, 20–22, especially 20n25. Sharrock (2009, 19–20n71) discusses in detail the wide spectrum of competing practices of reading Roman comedy ranging from strong claims for independence (Goldberg 1978 on the *Epidicus* and Stärk 1989 on *Menaechmi*) to the very opposite view (e.g., Lowe 1983; Fantham 1984; Zwierlein 1990–92). One might mention in this context the view that Roman comedy is also greatly indebted to the native farce and its tradition of improvisation (Lefevre, Stärk, and Vogt Spira 1991; see also Marshall 2006, 3–13, who stresses the influence of other Greek genres in addition to the native performance traditions).

13. This focus on the Roman agenda has informed several studies of Roman comedy (Segal 1968; Slater [1985] 2000; Moore 1998; Marshall 2006; Dutsch 2008; Sharrock 2009). For arguments on the Romanness of Roman comedy, see Segal (1968, 7): "Plautus made them laugh. And the laughter was Roman. . . . Roman drama from the earliest times is inextricably connected to Roman holidays." Slater, likewise, points out that the question of sources is secondary when it comes to the appreciation of Roman comedy as theater ([1985] 2000, 4). Sharrock (2009, 18–21) also proposes that, in the absence of direct Greek models, our interpretive efforts should focus on the texts as they stand. See also Moore's balanced assessment of Plautine references to Greek and Roman geography and institutions and his conclusion that the plays represent "a mixture of escapism and relevance," in which the exaggeratedly Hellenic milieu ultimately stands for Rome. Marshall situates Plautus within a tradition of free translation incorporating influences of several performance genres (2–8),

including Atellan farce with its practice of improvisation (2006, 261–97). Dutsch (2008, 39–40) argues that speech mannerisms of comedy reflect the gendered patterns of spoken Latin. On particular references to Roman institutions, see James 1998, 4–5, and James 2006, 225–26, for specifically Roman references in *Asinaria*; cf. Lowe 1992, 161, on the Roman *tresviri* (*Asin.* 131) and Moore 1998, 52, on the *lex Plaetoria* (*Rudens* 1380–82).

14. It is worth remarking that Greek myths were familiar across the Roman populace, so even plays about such alien characters as Medea would have seemed Romanized (see Manuwald in this volume).

15. But see James 1998; 2006, 271–72, and the discussions of the Bacchanalia and Roman comedy in Dutsch (2008, 172–81) and of homosexuality in Fontaine (2010, 226–47).

16. Adams 1984; Dutsch 2008; James 2006 and in this volume.

17. Halporn (1993, 201–2) argues that the Plautine *meretrix* is a specifically Roman character; see further discussion in James (2006, 225–26). On the wife, see Dutsch 2008, 79–81.

18. So Manuwald in this volume.

19. See Dutsch 2012.

20. So Welsh in this volume.

21. Even the question of whether his plays were staged publicly remains a matter of debate among scholars; see Kohn 2013 for an efficient summary of the debate.

22. For arguments favoring the focus on Republican Roman drama, see also Manuwald 2011, 10.

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Part One

Females in Performance



Feats of Flesh

The Female Body on the Plautine Stage

DOROTA DUTSCH

We touch here the most difficult point, that is, the bond between the flesh and the idea.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*

Plautine Bodies

We know precious little about the corporeal aspects of gender performance on the Roman stage. It is generally assumed that Roman actors wore masks and costumes that invoked, but did not mechanically reproduce, those of Greek New Comedy, and that, following the Greek convention, male actors assumed all roles, including female.¹ But scholarship on the subject gives more attention to the ideological implications of the practice of impersonation than to the physicality of the staged female body.² The characters' appearance, the relationship between the actor's body and the character's staged gender, and the audience's perceptual experience of staged bodies have received hardly any attention.³ And yet physicality is an integral part of performance. As Amy Richlin has put it, "any analysis [of Roman theater] we do must include an attempt to visualize what was a visual as well as a textual performance, to imagine it in a specific space at a specific historical moment" (2005, 2–3).⁴ I focus here on visualization and corporeality, proposing to explore, through Plautus's scripts, the ways the audience might have conceptualized staged female bodies.⁵

Different cultures situate staged bodies within different frameworks. For example, the medieval Noh master Zeami, wrote about three "stage bodies" that a

Noh actor could activate through “embodiment” (*monomane*), while David Graver in an influential article on modern acting listed seven ways in which an actor is present on stage, including character, performer, and flesh.⁶ As will become apparent shortly, Plautine characters reacting to the onstage presence of female characters offer detailed accounts of their sensory perception.⁷ Through a careful analysis of such accounts, we can reconstruct the framework that allowed the Roman artists and audiences to reconcile the actors’ and the female characters’ gender and to conceptualize the relationship between theater and lived experience. My analysis pertains to comedy, but some rudimentary principles of staging female bodies might, *mutatis mutandis*, be applicable to other genres as well.⁸

I begin my inquiry with the general reflections on the nature of acting in the tragicomedy *Amphitruo*, then turn to a survey of brief mentions of different female bodies in Plautus (in the section titled “Bodies at a Glance”), before coming finally to close readings of three Plautine scenes containing snapshots of attractive bodies: a slave woman in the *Truculentus* (in “*Truculentus*: Chasing Geese”), a male slave playing bride in the *Casina* (in “*Casina* and the Elephant Bride”), and a beautiful *meretrix* getting dressed in the *Mostellaria* (in “*Mostellaria*: Mirror, Mirror”). In all these scenes, female bodies receive sustained attention from onlookers, who, arguably, function as internal spectators modeling spectatorship for the audience, allowing us to formulate conclusions on the embodied aesthetics of female impersonation in Plautus.

***Amphitruo*: Self and Image**

The script of Plautus’s *Amphitruo* is a good place to start because it offers reflections on the mechanism of staging all bodies (including female) and rehearses pertinent vocabulary. Particularly useful is the prologue, in which Mercury prepares the audience for looking at characters on stage (1–152), envisioning briefly acting the play out as tragedy (51–55). In his speech Mercury alternates different personae with breakneck speed: he is simultaneously the god Mercury with all his powers, the actor speaking for his troupe, and a character in the play.⁹ For example, he insists that his appearance as a character in the *pallia* in a slave’s costume (*ornatus*) and posture (*schema*, 116–17) contrasts with “his” divine status, possibly as a character in tragedy. In addition to seeing the costumed actor and character, the viewers are also expected to view the *ornatus* and *schema* as signs standing for an individual—that is, to see characters with the eyes of other characters. It is in the context of this double perspective that Mercury speaks of *imago*, the mask standing for a character’s features. (Jupiter and Mercury will take on *imagines* of Amphitruo and his slave Sosia [120–30], so that the other characters will think that this is who

they are [142–47].)¹⁰ The sign for a female character on stage would have been composed of the same elements. For the comic *meretrix*, for example, the *ornatus* would have consisted of a dress with a dyed cloak and jewelry;¹¹ her *schema* would involve a sexy gait, while the *imago* would have made her recognizable to the audience as an individual within the world of the play.¹²

Imago can also denote, metonymically, the whole appearance of a staged body. Plautus uses *imago* in this sense in the first scene of the *Amphitruo*, in which the slave Sosia confronts Mercury, who has turned into his mirror image (*imago*). After examining Mercury's *imago* laboriously (441–46), Sosia concludes the obvious, namely, that whoever is standing in front of him cannot be Sosia because he is still himself:¹³ *sed cum cogito, equidem certo idem sum qui semper fui* (But upon reflection, I am certainly the same person I have always been).¹⁴ As a theatrical moment, this is of course hilarious, but behind the hilarity there is a profound reflection on who Sosia, and, for that matter, any person on stage—and off—really is. The real Sosia, it turns out, is the vantage point from which he has always been looking at things. Despite superficial similarity in wording, this vantage point is not a sublimated Cartesian *cogito* but rather a living body: Sosia immediately drops all arguments when Mercury threatens to break his limbs (454).¹⁵

In the light of Mercury's earlier instructions about actors and *imagines*, it makes sense to relate Sosia's juxtaposition of *idem* and *imago* to actor and mask. A performer impersonating a woman could thus be thought of as being present on stage in two ways: as himself (*ego, idem qui*) and as his female appearance (*forma, imago*), an object that he controls.¹⁶ The spectators could then look at the actor's *imago* on stage and read it also as a sign for a "woman," just as characters in the play are supposed to see it. In comedy, however, the relationships between the various aspects of embodiment and the different ways of looking at staged female bodies would have been far more complex, and Plautus often draws attention to this complexity.

Bodies at a Glance

Plautus's scripts have a tantalizing tendency to suggest that the female bodies visible on stage can be seen as other, completely different, bodies. Consider for example Sosia's allusion to the padded belly of the actor playing Alcumena in the *Amphitruo*: upon seeing Alcumena, he attributes the size of her (pregnant) belly to the size of the breakfast she must have eaten (*Amph.* 664–68). This joke draws attention to the visible theatrical prop, a part of the actor's *ornatus*, only to use that prop as a pretext for a fantastic image of a not-quite-human body whose shape betrays what it has swallowed.¹⁷

References to female bodies on stage often point to grotesque features and deportment (*schema*): the miser in the *Aulularia* threatens to beat up his old servant for walking like a turtle (*Aul.* 49).¹⁸ Several female characters are seen frantically sniffing around (e.g., *Curc.* 105; *Cas.* 236); one may possibly “see better with her nose than with her eyes” (*Mil.* 1259).¹⁹ The old nurse in the *Curculio* is said to be more canine than human, to judge by her keen nose (110), while her charge is described as “an owl-eyed little mask” (190–92). It is reasonable to infer, based on these allusions, that some of the animal features were suggested by deportment, stage action, or mask, but we cannot always say where the visible ends and the imaginary begins.²⁰ It is even more difficult to make this distinction when it comes to accounts of sensory reactions to the attractive body, which is often experienced at as an almost elemental force.²¹ When Menaechmus’s girlfriend, Erotium, enters the stage, he asks his sidekick: “Do you see the sun, how it has been blinded by the brightness of her body?”²² Diniarchus in the *Truculentus* exclaims upon seeing his girlfriend, Phronesium: “Look, it’s spring: all in flowers, fragrant, brilliantly bright!” (353–54). Again, one might construe the comment on the *meretrix*’s luminescence as a reference to the appearance of the standard costume of such a character, which, as Pollux claims, was bright yellow, worn with a white theatrical mask and lead-white *cerussa* on the actor’s arms and neck.²³

But this is not the entire story: as they are looking at the material, human bodies of actors on stage, the spectators are encouraged to imagine them transcending their physical limitations, becoming an animal or dissolving into light and color.²⁴ Plautine allusions to the physical presence of female characters thus not only reflect the visual aspects of comedy, functioning as instant loci of reception, but also point beyond the limits of the lived human body (the fantastic physiology of Alcmena’s python-like digestion) and reference moments of perception stored in the audience’s memory. The image of a hunchbacked crone would, for example, almost certainly have resonated with the audience’s (and the actors’) lived memories of old women on the streets of Rome.²⁵ Caught within these networks of sensations and memories, the female body on the Plautine stage is a complex entity that spans with equal ease the fictional world of the play with its fantastic potential for becoming animal, the physical environment of the theater, and the audience’s memories and expectations derived from everyday experience. This blend between the physical and the imaginary texture of experience comes sharply into focus in Plautus’s *Truculentus*.

***Truculentus*: Chasing Geese**

Truculentus is a play about the power of sexual attraction.²⁶ Phronesium, its flamboyant heroine, is an accomplished *meretrix* who deftly extracts gifts from three

lovers: an urbanite, a rustic, and a soldier (see also Fantham in this volume). My focus here is on a rather less upscale aspect of Phronesium's business, namely, the efforts of her female slave Astaphium as dramatized in her encounter with the play's eponymous Grouch (256–321).²⁷ Plautus first gives his audience/reader the chance to gaze upon Astaphium in her interaction with the now-impecunious urban lover, Diniarchus. He greets the little maid (*ancillula*) fondly, remembering that he has had dealings (*commercium*) with her (93–94; cf. 163). He seems to be intent on using her services again, for he tries to make her walk away with him (124), though he mentions no compensation. The stage action would have featured him grabbing her hand or arm and pulling, as Astaphium is trying to extricate herself and direct the conversation toward Phronesium and the business of hiring male and female sex workers in general (147–59).

When the insolvent customer finally leaves her alone, Astaphium knocks at the door of the house of her mistress's most promising new client, the rustic lover. The only snag: the client's exceptionally rude slave, who has been chasing away Phronesium's servants, "like geese from grain" (251). Now Astaphium must be ready to become a goose once more. (This image of chasing geese away must reveal something about the scene's choreography.) Grouch opens the door and proves, unlike Diniarchus, insensitive to Astaphium's charms. When, exasperated, she sighs, "What a brute," *nimum trulentust*, he hears *truncus lentus*, "soft trunk," and takes her remark as an insult to his virility. The audience is invited to look at Astaphium through the eyes of this angry brute. It turns out that he sees no pretty little maid but rather a skinny creature decorated with cheap trinkets (270–72):

aduenisti huc te ostentatum cum exornatis ossibus
quia tibi suaso infecisti propudiosa pallulam.
an eo bella es, quia accepistis tibi armillas aeneas?

You have come here to show yourself off, your bony frame all primped up, just because you have dyed your little cloak a grimy gray, you vile thing? Think you're pretty just because you've bought yourself some brass bracelets?

Grouch resentfully details Astaphium's appearance. He divines a skinny frame beneath her shabby clothes, as he sees or pretends to see them, and mocks the gray color of her little cloak, which, incidentally, would underscore her (gray) goose-like appearance.²⁸ In order to visualize this scene, we should keep in mind that, while everything about Astaphium seems puny—she is a little maid, all bones, in her little brown cloak (270–71)—Grouch most likely belongs to the stock type of a burly slave with red hair.²⁹ So, when, after mocking the cheapness of her outfit,

Grouch grabs the little maid's hand (allegedly to check whether her bracelets are really made of bronze rather than wood), she must have seemed quite vulnerable.³⁰ Hands grasping skinny arms in daily transactions somewhere in the Roman Forum immediately come to mind.³¹

Ironically, in the fictional world of the play this moment marks in fact Astaphium's professional success. As she protests, *ne me attigas*, "Don't touch me" (275), Grouch is obviously pulling her toward himself, just as Diniarchus had done. This is the first sign of his transformation into a caricature of a comic lover and the reversal of power relations. For the moment, he is in full denial and swears that he would rather spend the night with a cow than accept a free gift of a hundred nights with Astaphium (276–79). Knowing better than to take his rejection at face value, she apparently stays close to Grouch, who, in a last-ditch effort, screams at her to leave (286–90):

GR. abire hinc nisi properas grandi gradu,
iam hercle ego istos fictos, compositos, crispas cincinnos tuos,
unguentatos usque ex cerebro evellam. AS. quamam gratia?
GR. quia ad fores nostras unguentis uncta es aussa accedere
quia bucculas tam bene purpurissatas habes.

GR. If you don't hurry and get away from here and in big steps, I will soon
pull those fake, coiffed, curly, oiled coils out of your brain. AS. Why?
GR. Because you have dared to come to our door smelling of perfume,
and your cheeks are such a pretty red.

The slave's outburst brings us uncomfortably close to a rouged face, strong perfume, and an impossibly complicated coiffure. On the surface, this appearance belongs to the woman. But her look, as reported by Grouch, is so artificial as to seem quite close to the actor's *ornatus*, complete with wooden jewelry.³² The red-painted cheeks may reference the actor's *imago*, as well as the character's makeup. Likewise, the rigid artificiality of the locks evokes a wig rather than living hair, though this conclusion is undermined by the fantastic image of hair roots going down to Astaphium's brain.

Along with Grouch, the audience contemplates the maid/the actor as a grotesque assemblage until the next comment finally directs their attention to her/his flesh (291–95):

AS. erubui mecastor misera propter clamorem tuom.
GR. itane erubuisti? quasi uero corpori reliqueris

tuo potestatem coloris ulli capiendi, mala!
 buccas rubrica, creta omne corpus intinxti tibi.
 pessumae estis.

AS. Oh god, your yelling made me feel wretched and blush!

GR. You must be kidding. You want me to believe that you have left any chance to your body to turn any color, you wicked girl. You have covered your face in rouge and your body in chalk. You all are utterly wicked.

Astaphium now reports a physical reaction to the force of his voice: a blush. Grouch is quick to point out that none of the character's (or actor's) skin is visible. Through constant use of foundation, the girl (and the actor) has deprived her (and his) flesh of its power to turn different colors, presumably, the colors of genuine emotions, in this case *pudor* (Greek *aischynē*).³³ But this impossible blush calls attention to the body beneath clothing and makeup, both the fictional body of the character and the physical body of the actor, establishing a dynamic of inside versus outside, the true self of sensation and experience versus the front of the theatrical (or social) persona, or to use Sosia's vocabulary, *ego* and *imago*.³⁴

Grouch finds it impossible to resist the fusion of the two. When he comes back on stage, he will be ready to spend all his savings on Astaphium (669–78). Since her physicality is coextensive with that of the actor, Grouch's grudging acceptance of the artifice of her cheap glamour also implies his acceptance of the artifice of theater.³⁵ The country slave begins as a viewer and lover unwilling to be deceived by Astaphium's charms, but in the end yields to theatrical deceit and agrees to play by the rules of the Plautine theater game. This game involves being seduced by appearances (despite one's better judgment) and looking at the actors'/characters' bodies on stage as potential objects of desire.

***Casina* and the Elephant Bride**

While Grouch's encounter with Astaphium in *Truculentus* illustrates how an apprentice lover and spectator can learn to suspend disbelief and enjoy the show, the wedding scene in *Casina* warns of the dangers of suspending disbelief too far. *Casina* is named after a beautiful young slave girl who never appears on stage, but who nevertheless keeps in thrall several suitors (and the audience). Casina was brought up by the matron Cleostrata like her own daughter and will eventually prove to be freeborn and marry Cleostrata's son (on *Casina*, see also James and Fantham in this volume). Meanwhile, however, Cleostrata's husband, Lysidamus, who desires to sleep with the girl, is pretending that he wants her to be married to

Olympio, the manager of the country estate. Both Olympio and Cleostrata's own counter-candidate, the armor bearer (*armiger*) Chalinus, desire Casina. Lysidamus's man, Olympio, wins a lottery arranged in order to decide which of the two slaves will become Casina's husband. It is crucial to stress here that Lysidamus's sexual urges are also directed toward his male slaves: later in the play, while waiting for Casina, Lysidamus will try to obtain sexual gratification from the future husband first (724–45).³⁶

Meanwhile, in order to protect Casina, Cleostrata disguises the *armiger* Chalinus as the bride. Her maid, Pardalisca, officiates at the mock wedding. Both Lysidamus and Olympio, very excited, come to claim their tender young bride. Casina/Chalinus comes on stage properly attired as a female *imago*, wearing the *ornatus* of a bride and veiled. Given references to Chalinus's elephant-like step and his function as *armiger*, Chalinus would have been very robustly built, so there very likely was something visibly wrong with his posture (*schema*).³⁷ While the bride's unusual size would have been visible to the audience, it does not register with the besotted men. The tension between the two planes of perception becomes a fertile source of humor (843–49).

OL. o / corpusculum malacum!

LY. quid est? OL. insitit plantam

quasi luca bos. LY. tace sis,

nebula haud est aeque atque huius est pectus.

OL. edepol papillam bellulam—eo miser mihi!

LY. quid est? OL. pectus mi icit non cubito uerum ariete.

OL. O / soft little body!

LY. What is it? OL. She set her foot—

Like an elephant. LY. Shut up, not even mist is as soft as her chest.

OL. What a beautiful breast! Ouch, it hurts!

LY. What is it? OL. She hit my chest not with her elbow but with a battering ram!

Attempts to touch “Casina” yield several surprises. This military bride has a sharp elbow and walks with all the grace of Hannibal's elephants, but the men are too wedded to the mental image of a delicate girl and to the exterior appearance of “the bride” to draw rational conclusions. Undeterred, they proceed with the bedding ceremony, which takes place inside. Their exploits are recounted in their two speeches, which invite the audience to imagine touching the bride's body. The one delivered by the slave (who apparently managed to be the first to try to

bed Casina) is more detailed and better preserved. It is Pardalisca the maid who questions him (909–14):

OL. dum gladium quaero ne habeat, arripio capulum.

Sed quom cogito, non habuit gladium, nam esset frigidus.

PA. eloquere. **OL.** at pudet. **PA.** num radix fuit? **OL.** non fuit. **PA.** num cucumis?

OL. profecto hercle non fuit quicquam holerum,
nisi, quidquid erat, calamitas profecto attigerat numquam.
ita, quidquid erat, grande erat.

OL. While I am searching to make sure that she has no sword, I pull the handle. But when I think about it, she did not have a sword; for it would have been cold.

PA. Say it. **OL.** But I am ashamed. **PA.** Was it a radish? **OL.** No it wasn't. **PA.** A cucumber?

OL. Whatever vegetable it was, it clearly has never been touched by any disease—so big it was, whatever it was.

The body discovered in the bedroom—touched but not seen—is equipped with an oblong object that can be plausibly identified with a part of male anatomy. The text that follows is corrupt, but it is clear that Olympio's bride proves to be bearded (929) and kicks the would-be groom so vigorously that he falls out of the bed and runs away (930–31). Lysidamus suffers a similar fate and ends up humbly begging his wife's forgiveness.³⁸

As Barbara Gold (1998) has persuasively argued, the play-within-the-play featuring a man disguised as a woman can plausibly be interpreted as a comment on gender as performance as well as on the practice of female impersonation. If we further consider the male characters' adventures as representative of those of the spectators, the fact that the only "Casina" on stage is really Chalinus, the bearded bride, gains new significance. What happens on stage with the characters' fantasies about the beautiful Casina evokes the experience of those seasoned spectators, who are so willing to see an illusory beautiful maiden that they forget that the only maiden actually physically present on stage may be a strapping lad with a pachyderm's foot, a sharp elbow, and an unnamed object shaped like a root vegetable. By casting Chalinus in the role of would-be rapist of his master, Lysidamus, Plautus daringly reverses the typical relationship between citizen males and slaves as portrayed on the Plautine stage—of which the scenes in which Lysidamus molests Olympio are representative. (See also Richlin in this volume.) If this role

reversal is a commentary on theater, Chalinus the cross-dresser stands for the female impersonator. The transvestite wedding of “Casina” is, then, a way of asserting not only the comic slave’s momentary and absurd triumph over his master but also the actor’s autonomy from the female appearance he assumes. Chalinus—the character and the actor—may well be wearing female clothing, but this apparel need not determine the agenda for his own flesh.

The prologue to the *Casina* plays with this breach of unity between the character and the actor’s body by reassuring the audience that although Casina is indeed a chaste maiden in the plot of the play, the actor does not have to follow her example (84–86).³⁹

mox hercle uero, post transactam fabulam,
argentum si quis dederit, ut ego suspicor,
ultro ibit nuptum, non manebit auspices.

But soon enough, when the comedy is finished,
If someone pays good money, “Casina” will, I suspect,
Be willingly “married,” without consulting the augurs.

At this point, the audience is likely inclined to think of Casina as a male actor, so the allusion to Casina’s willingness to be bedded might be taken as an allusion (good humored or malicious) to the actor’s willingness to offer sexual services. Without good external evidence for the precise circumstances to which the prologue refers, it is hard to know what to make of this strange topical allusion.⁴⁰ One thing is sure, however: if the spectators recalled the line after the show, they might have been rather wary of enlisting “Casina’s” services.⁴¹

***Mostellaria*: Mirror, Mirror**

If Casina’s wedding warns against lovers’ fascination with the image of a beautiful woman, the toilette scene in the *Mostellaria* features a scene concerned with a woman’s relationship with her own appearance. The scene shows the beautiful young *meretrix* Philematium getting dressed with the help of old Scapha. A former *meretrix* herself, Scapha has raised Philematium. The girl has recently obtained her freedom, thanks to her devoted lover, Philolaches, and Scapha has become her former charge’s slave.⁴² Philolaches is eavesdropping as the scene opens. Philematium enters, apparently in a theatrical equivalent of *au naturel*. The boyfriend appears enthralled by the sight: he pronounces her a goddess (Venus) and an irresistible storm that has dissolved his self-control (162–65). Philematium then

begins to put on makeup, clothes, and jewelry, insisting that she must do so in order to please her lover. At each step, she asks Scapha to look at her and critique her choices, but the old woman systematically refuses. Instead, showering her with lavish compliments, she insists that dress and adornments are superfluous, because lovers love not the woman's clothes but their stuffing (*vestis fartim*) (166–69). Philolaches repeatedly assents: he is far more interested in his lover's body than in her trinkets (284–87).

Throughout this whole scene, as Philematium is covering herself, Scapha is undressing for the audience an impossibly perfect body of a beautiful woman (131, 135: *mulier pulchra*). Her skin is so radiant that the white foundation (*cerussa*) would look like ink against it; her cheeks are so red that rouge could only mar them; her beauty needs no adornment (258–63).⁴³ The fantasy of the unadorned body of a beautiful woman informs the audience's voyeuristic pleasure as they contemplate the *meretrix* dressing to please her lover, while also inspecting the layers of clothing put on by the actor playing Philematium. The tension between the person inside and the outward appearance, which shaped Grouch's reaction to Astaphium and caused the would-be grooms' misadventures in the *Casina*, is also at work in this scene in the *Mostellaria*.⁴⁴ As the script pokes fun at the young woman diligently covering a body that looks best uncovered, it provokes readers and audiences to think about women, their bodies, and their performance of attractiveness in daily life. Mirrors and mirroring serve as focalizing devices in this playful thought experiment.

In requesting repeatedly that Scapha look at her and critique her appearance, Philematium in fact asks the old woman to act as a living mirror of sorts. It is therefore significant that, when Scapha finally ventures a criticism, she suggests another sort of mirroring. In order to really know about appearances, she says, Philematium should look at Scapha and try to see that Scapha's former beauty mirrored her own (199–202):

uides quae sim et quae fui ante.
 nihilo ego quam nunc tu * * * * *
 * * * * * amata sum; atque uni modo gessi morem:
 qui pol me, ubi aetate hoc caput colerem commutavit,
 reliquit deseruitque me. tibi idem futurum credo.

You see how I am and how I was before. I no less than you now * * * * *
 I was loved; and I succumbed to one man only: this man, I swear, when
 this head here changed color with age, left and abandoned me. I believe
 the same will happen to you.

Just as Scapha's past image reflects Philematium's present, so Scapha's present is likely to reflect Philematium's future. In asking the young woman to make the connection, Scapha invites her to see the living flesh in all its potential for change.⁴⁵ Philematium, however, is interested in a rigid reflection of her own appearance and threatens to have the old woman flogged. Under this threat, Scapha promises to resume her flattering mode (*adsentabor*). Now Philematium asks for an actual mirror (248–51):

PHILEM. cedo mi speculum et cum ornamentis arculam actutum,
 Scapha,
 ornata ut sim cum huc adveniat Philolaches, uoluptas mea.
SC. mulier quae suam aetatem spernit, speculo ei usus est:
 quid opust speculo tibi quae tute speculo speculum es maxumum.

PHILEM. Here, give me a mirror, Scapha, quickly and the little chest with the jewels [also: theatrical props], so that I might be dressed [also: “costumed”] when Philolaches, my delight, comes here.
SC. A woman who denies her age needs a mirror:
 What do you need a mirror for? You yourself are your own best mirror.

Scapha insists that Philematium has no need for any ordinary mirror: she both reflects herself and is reflected, serving herself as mirror (*tute . . . speculum*) and being a mirror to herself (*tibi . . . speculo*). This critique of the girl's narcissistic fixation on her appearance resonates with other remarks that Scapha has made. There is no need for the beautiful girl to use her mirror image as a model, Scapha suggests, because Philematium is her own model: she herself (*tute*) takes precedence over the image in the mirror. This self (*uestis fartis*), like the flesh capable of conveying emotions (*Truc.* 292: *corpori tuo*), is a continuum of depth and surface, mind and body. In other words, Philematium should follow Sosia's example, and become aware of her *eadem quae* and able to divorce herself from her mirror image.

Reflecting surfaces in Plautus are often used to help the audience think about the theatrical *imago* and the imaginary process in which a person's appearance is detached from its source to function independently.⁴⁶ Something of a similar nature emerges in this scene: Philematium is becoming so infatuated with her own *imago* that it becomes her quasi double. When she finally hands the mirror back to Scapha, the girl gives her mirror image a kiss, provoking a comically jealous outburst from Philolaches, who proposes to smash the mirror's head with a stone

(265–66). This outburst in effect emancipates the mirror image,⁴⁷ making it into a rival love object, which (briefly and playfully) casts a shadow over the idyllic relationship between the young couple.

Taking one's mirror image for one's true self is, it turns out, not merely a contrived theatrical device but an issue well known to the Roman audience. The issue is introduced in a typical Plautine stratagem, by a woman speaking against her own kind. After advising Philematium that she does not need any perfume, Scapha launches into a tirade against women who abuse cosmetics (273–81):

SC. quia ecaster mulier recte olet ubi nihil olet.
 nam istae ueteres, quae se unguentis unctitant, interpoles,
 uetulae, edentulae, quae uitia corporis fuco occultunt,
 ubi sese sudor cum unguentis consociauit, ilico
 itidem olent quasi quom una multa iura confudit coquos.
 quid olant nescias, nisi id unum ut male olere intellegas.
 PHILOL. ut perdocte cuncta callet! nihil hac docta doctius.
 uerum illuc est: maxuma adeo pars uostrorum intellegit,
 quibus anus domi sint uxores, quae uos dote meruerunt.

SC. Because, by Castor, a woman smells good when she smells of nothing. All those old women, who constantly sprinkle themselves with perfume, toothless old crones, all refurbished, who hide blemishes on their skin with rouge, and when their sweat mingles with the fragrance, they smell as though the cook has mixed all sauces together. You have no idea what it is they smell of, except for one thing: you know that they smell bad.
 PHILOL. How exquisitely knowledgeable she is in her learning. No one is more knowing than she. This is true: and most of you who have old wives at home, who have bought you with their dowries, realize it.

Disguised as a critique of the grooming habits of the fictional aging women of Athens is a reaction to female bodies encountered on the streets of Rome. These women hide the imperfections of their skin beneath foundation and rouge, identifying themselves—against Plautus's and Scapha's advice—with their mirror images. A renovated face of such a woman, neither old nor young, Scapha implies, is the visual equivalent of a nauseating mixture of sweat and perfume. No one, except for the woman herself, is deceived, and the discontinuity between the deteriorating body and its refurbished surface makes an image-obsessed matron look like the costumed and masked actor playing a prostitute on the Plautine

stage.⁴⁸ Philematium's body on stage can be thus seen as many superimposed bodies—the ideal body of *mulier pulchra*; the theatrical body of the beautiful *meretrix*, dressed and undressed; and the actor's body in the process of putting on costume. Most important, it also stands as a potential *comparandum* for the living bodies of Roman women.

Epilogue

Plautine accounts of sensory perception refer to both visible and imaginary embodiments. The visible includes the *ornatus*, the *schema*, and the *imago*, the universal elements of the theatrical attire. But in comedy these visible features would have been supplemented by textual representations of female flesh, such as Scapha's account of the beautiful young body of *mulier nuda* or the imaginary menagerie of women becoming turtles or elephant-like brides. At the most basic level, staged female bodies are envisioned within a dynamic of inside and outside. A character's body (*corpus*) or the self (*tute, egomet*) is contrasted with the "exterior" (*forma, imago*) assembled out of makeup, clothing, and costume jewelry. While alluding to these fictional outsides and insides of characters' bodies, the Plautine scripts also play out the tension between the several corporealities of the actors. The outside, the masked and costumed persona, is contrasted with the inside, the actor's male body. The latter is enriched by all the on- and offstage possibilities alluded to in *Casina*, from sexual abuse and prostitution to an assertion of physical strength.

Plautine images and *imagines* thus evoke a multiplicity of identities and numerous possibilities for bodies, complicating the plots' focus on citizen men falling in love with young women. Grouch the rude slave falls for Astaphium the maid and/or the actor impersonating her; Chalinus the *armiger*, costumed as a bride, threatens his master with rape; finally, Scapha evokes the physical symptoms of aging (including her own) and claims that Roman matrons, like comic actors, stage their attractiveness. The scenes we have examined, with their focus on the gap between bodies and appearances, would have invited the spectators to appreciate the ability of the actor's body to become other bodies. To watch an actor impersonating a woman on the Plautine stage would, therefore, have meant to contemplate the body's capacity to perform various identities, its potential to engage with the world in multiple ways, both on and off the stage.

NOTES

I am very grateful to Sharon James and David Konstan for their comments on earlier versions of this paper.

1. On possible influences of the *Atellana* on the Roman staging, see Wiles 1991, 130–31; and Marshall 2006, 144–45.
2. Critics have argued that cross-dressing in Plautus's *Casina* is a model for gendered performance (Gold 1998; Dutsch 2008) and discussed the ambiguous social status of the Roman *histrio* (Edwards 1997; Duncan 2006).
3. On female masks, see Marshall 2006, 129–30; cf. Wiles 1991, 136–37 and 152–53.
4. Richlin in this volume explores the intersection of Plautine representation of gender and slavery. On Plautine comedy as slave theater, see also Richlin 2014.
5. Historically, Plautus would have found, in the Greek originals, ideas that would have resonated with theories elaborated by Greek philosophers, especially Aristotle. It is, however, unlikely that these highly technical theories (cf. Lorenz 2007, 180) were widely known to the Roman audience. On the vision and conventions of Roman comedy, see Sharrock 2009, 100–115.
6. On Zeami's basic body types (*santai*)—warrior, old person, and woman—kinds of embodiment (*monomane*), see Brown 2002, 23–27; Graver's taxonomy of seven ways in which the actor's stage body is perceived consists of character, performer, commentator, personage, group representative, flesh, and sensation (1997).
7. The chapter is concerned with Plautus only for the sake of consistency and economy.
8. Consider, for example, a *praetexta* staged during funeral games: on such an occasion, the staged body of a famous ancestor would be juxtaposed with the living bodies of the descendants present in theater.
9. On the Plautine audience, see Richlin (2014 and in this volume). The spectators should expect to be looked at as well; Mercury presents himself both as the object of their gaze and as the subject who can look back (e.g., 52). On the address to the audience in Plautus, see, e.g., Barsby 1995, 63; and Beacham 1991, 33. The reversibility of perspective of seer-being-seen is one of the crucial premises of Merleau-Ponty's understanding of perception as a continuum of overlapping sensibilities. Merleau-Ponty discusses the encounters with the Other in *The Visible and Invisible*; the Other brings “another private world” (1965, 11); one becomes a part of the other's vision (123) as a “subject-object” (166).
10. Such an understanding is close to the meaning of *imago* as postmortem mask, one that reproduces a person's unique facial features, and that, through this duplication, makes them no longer unique, personal, or corporeal (cf. *Amph.* 458–59). The perception of mask-as-person is recorded by Cicero (*De Oratore* 2.139), who wrote about the experience of watching a performance of *Teucer*: *Saepe ipse vidi ut ex persona mihi ardere oculi hominis histriionis viderentur* (I have often myself witnessed how, out of the mask, the eyes of a human being, the actor, seemed to glow at me).
11. According to Marshall, the only distinction between female characters visible to the audience would have been age (2006, 129); the description of Astaphium's cheap attire in *Truculentus*, however, suggests that status would also have been signaled. The *Persa* offers another example of differentiation in the wealth of the female *ornatus*: when the slave Sagaristio and the maiden dress up as a wealthy Persian merchant and his captive, she comes on stage wearing a new, splendid *ornatus* (462–66).

12. On the gait, see the discussion on *Truculentus* later in this chapter. Two identical *imagines* might have been produced for twins: see Palaestrio's expository monologue in the *Miles* (150–53).

13. Cf. also *Capt.* 37–39, where Philocrates and Tyndarus exchange their *imagines*.

14. For *cum cogito* meaning “upon reflection,” cf. *Cas.* 910. The juxtaposition of *cogito* and *sum* in this sentence has (since the early eighteenth century) brought to readers' minds René Descartes's *cogito ergo sum* and his apology of *cogito* as pure reason. On Descartes and *Amphitruo*, since Vico's *On the Most Ancient Wisdom of the Italians*, published in 1710 (1988, 53); cf. de Melo's introduction to the Loeb edition (2011, 4).

15. A similar awareness of one's permanence is an important feature of Merleau-Ponty's theory of perception: “The permanence of my own body is entirely different in kind [from the permanence of objects]; the body defies exploration and is always presented to me from the same angle. Its permanence is not a permanence in the world; it is a permanence on my part” (cf. 1962, 90).

16. His relationship with this *imago* can be represented in terms of subject and object: *ubi ego perii? ubi immutatus sum? ubi ego formam peridi? / an egomet me illinc relinqui si forte oblitus fui? / nam hic quidem omnem imaginem meam, quae anehac fuerat, possidet.* (When did I perish? When was I exchanged? When did I lose my appearance? Have I myself left me here and by chance forgotten? For, to be sure, this fellow has in his possession all the *imago* that used to be mine.) See also line 121, in which Jupiter is said to have “transformed himself [*se vortit*] into the *imago*” of Amphitruo; in 124 Mercury says that he “took” (*sumpsi*) the *imago* of Sosia; cf. 141. Sosia quickly realizes the freedom inherent in this syntax: if his *imago* must comply with the rules of the theater game and might be somebody's property, he himself is not bound by the same rules (459–62). Sosia—like most Plautine actors—is a slave, so his awareness has important ideological implications; on the low social status of Roman actors, see Edwards 1997, 121–26; Csapo and Slater 1995, 275–85; Duncan 2006, 160–87; Marshall 2006, 83–125; Manuwald 2011, 85–87. See also the discussion later in this chapter on Chalinus in the *Casina*.

17. See Phillips 1985 on the pregnant woman joke; cf. Christenson's commentary (2000, ad loc.).

18. One old slave explains that she has good justification for the way she walks: eighty-four years of slavery, sweat, and thirst (*Mer.* 670–75).

19. Another woman asserts that she can sniff out the difference between an impostor and her daughter (*Epid.* 575–79).

20. Cf. Dutsch 2008, 80–83.

21. See also the very general references in *Mer.* 260: *mulier forma eximia* (a woman of exceptional beauty); cf. *Curc.* 167: *est lepida* (she is cute); and *Poen.* 279: *Nam Venus non est Venus* (Venus is no longer Venus).

22. *Men.* 179–80: *solem vides / satin ut occaecatust pro huius corporis candoribus?*

23. Wiles (1991, 88) points out that a pale/dark contrast in the color of mask corresponded to female/male in Menander's theater.

24. This intensive quasi-transformation into another being is suggested by such

descriptions, which are reminiscent of the notion of becoming animal as defined by Deleuze and Guattari (1986, 35–37; cf. also 1987, 232–309).

25. I am relying here on a premise of performance theory that artistic performance and social performance form a continuum and influence each other (see, e.g., Schechner 1985, 14).

26. On the generic proximity of this comedy to satire, see Konstan 1983, 161–64.

27. Cf. *Poen.* 270: *seruolorum sordidorum scorta diobolaria* (the twopenny whores of dirty little slaves). On Astaphium's use of seduction, see also Richlin (this volume).

28. Grouch's suggestion that Astaphium herself dyed her cloak the pathetic dirty gray is malicious. *Suasum*, the color of grime, was apparently a natural result of the prolonged exposure of a white garment to smoke (Fest. 302M).

29. On this type, see Marshall 2006, 134.

30. *Attingere* often refers to an undesirable sexual touch or some kind of aggressive and unwelcome grabbing; cf. Lodge *ad voc.*

31. The action of the *Truculentus* takes place in Athens, but the prologue is quite emphatic that this city of "Athens" is really Rome (1–3).

32. Grouch's complaint about Astaphium's walk has a parallel in another scene making fun of a prostitute's walk (cf. *Cist.* 379–80).

33. Cf. Seneca, *Ep.* 11.7 and his comments on the actor's inability to blush. For a discussion of shame in the Greek world, see Konstan 2006, 91–110; see especially his comments on the positive aspects of *aiskhyne* (102–6) and on blushing as a sign of modesty (296n19).

34. Later Roman texts (so Kaster 2005, 22–23) tend to represent slaves as incapable of the sentiment of *verecundia* and so probably incapable of blushing. This pattern does not seem clear-cut in Plautus: the *uilius* in the *Casina* confesses that he has never been ashamed before (878), but he is ashamed after all (897–99). Likewise, it is the slave Tyndarus (*Capt.* 203) who is ashamed to be put in chains, not his master Philocrates. Cf. also the references to slaves' *pudor* (*Ru.* 1053, 1062) and an attempt to use torture to force a shameless slave to blush (*Capt.* 962).

35. On comedy and controlled deceit, see Sharrock 2009, 2–7.

36. Chalinus alludes to an assault in 462; on citizens routinely using males slaves as sex objects in Plautus, see Williams 2010, 36–38; on this practice as widely attested elsewhere, see Williams 2010, 31–35. Fontaine notes that jokes involving sex between men most often appear to depend on Latin wordplay (2010, 217–18).

37. On Chalinus's likely physique, see Anderson (1983, 19–20).

38. In the play's finale, however, Chalinus asks the audience to applaud and wishes them luck in cheating on their wives (1015–18).

39. On this allusion, see further Richlin in this volume.

40. The prologue, as Slater (2000, 60) has argued, may have been revised in large part after Plautus's death, but it is nevertheless a good testimony to the performance context of the *palliata*.

41. Allusions associating comedy with male prostitution are also made in *Poe.* 17,

where an aging whore (*scortum exoletum*) is reminded not to sit directly on the stage, and in *Curc.* 473, listing where *scorta exoleta* could be found.

42. On Scapha, see also Richlin, this volume.

43. On the odors of the female body, see *Men.* 168, *Poe.* 240–45; on bad breath, specifically, *Asin.* 824, 913, 927.

44. Scapha thinks of the whole person as *vestis fartis*: cf. the lines leading to her comment (166–67): “Why don’t you outfit yourself with an attractive character [*moribus lepidis*] since you are attractive [*lepida*] yourself.”

45. A similar possibility is suggested in the *Epidicus* (382–93), when Periphanes suggests that instead of ordinary mirrors, there should be mirrors that allow fathers to see their past selves and thus better understand their sons.

46. In the *Amphitruo*, for example, Sosia is able to recognize his body (441: *formam meam*; 458: *imaginem meam*) in the body of Sosia/Mercury because he has often looked into a mirror (442: *saepe in speculum inspexi*). In the *Menaechmi* (1062), a slave exclaims, upon seeing his master’s double, that he sees his mirror image, *speculum*.

47. See also Scapha’s comment that the smell of silver on Philematium’s hands might arouse her boyfriend’s suspicion (267–69).

48. Scapha’s position on spending has obvious implications for the ongoing debate on female spending and the repeal of *lex Oppia*; cf. Gruen 1990, 144–46. Cf. Johnston 1980 on the *Poenulus*.

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Slave-Woman Drag

AMY RICHLIN

In 214 BCE, according to Livy, Roman troops took seven Samnite towns; they captured or killed 25,000 people (24.20.6). In the same year, they sacked Megara and Henna in Sicily (Livy 24.35.2, 24.39.1–7). In 212, troops under Marcellus famously sacked Syracuse; in 210, Roman troops took Agrigentum in Sicily and New Carthage in Spain and enslaved the citizens (Livy 26.40.13; Polybius 10.17.15; Livy 26.47.1–3). In 209, according to Livy (27.16.7), they took Tarentum and enslaved 30,000 people. In 200, according to the *didascaliae*, *Stichus* was performed at the Plebeian Games. In 198, Roman forces sacked Dyme in Achaia and enslaved the inhabitants (Livy 32.22.10). At the same time, in other parts of the Mediterranean and in Italy itself, other armies contributed to the flow of persons who began their week as free or slave inhabitants of one place and ended it as objects for sale, either on the spot or someplace else—many in Rome. Kathy Gaca has demonstrated that the sacking of cities in “populace-ravaging warfare” characteristically entailed the rape of captives, particularly women and girls (2010–11). In consciousness of this historical context, C. W. Marshall has called for a darker understanding of the relationship between sex trafficking and the plots of New Comedy (2013). I have argued elsewhere (2014b) that, in the century from 300 to 200 BCE, as the population of the city of Rome grew to include an influx of slaves, and some of these were transformed into citizens upon manumission, the audiences of a new theatrical attraction, New Comedy in Latin, simultaneously incorporated this group; moreover, as the *ludi* aimed to please the city population, so the comic plays addressed this constituency in the audience. The actors and playwrights themselves came from the lower classes or were slaves. Endemic war—not just the Second Punic War, terrible as it was—conditioned the lives of Plautus’s audience and players, with the concomitant practices of kidnapping, piracy, and the abandonment or sale of children by desperate parents.

Paul the Deacon in the eighth century CE retails the following etymology of the Latin word *ancilla*, a word here translated “slave-woman”: “*Ancillae* are so called from the name of King Ancus Martius, because he captured a great number of women in war” (Paulus ex Festo 18L). Paulus’s source for this scholarly fancy reaches back to the first century BCE, where it attests to an ongoing association between slave-women and the processes of enslavement—an association that was present to the inhabitants of the city in the flesh, every day. Around 200 BCE, in the temporary theater of the *ludi*, slave-women and freedwomen were not only present in the audience but also represented, by male actors, onstage.¹ The plays are full of the voices of male slaves, and female slaves are often re-objectified onstage, but sometimes the plays give a voice to these female objects: worth listening for.

Ancillae in Plautus are often, but not always, house slaves, and belong sometimes to women and sometimes to men; of these, some belong to pimps, and, of these, some are prostitutes and main characters in the plays (see Marshall 2013). Here I will discuss a range of major and minor characters—first as characters, then with actors inside them.

Object into Subject

Michelle Cliff, in an essay titled “Object into Subject,” wrote of American racism (1982, 34):

Through objectification—the process by which people are dehumanized, made ghostlike, given the status of Other—an image created by the oppressor replaces the actual being. The actual being is then denied speech; denied self-definition, self-realization; and over-arching all this, denied selfhood—which is after all the point of objectification.²

Cliff’s project was to analyze the work of African American women artists as a response to a history of objectification—to show how object turned into subject. The differences between Rome and the Americas as slave societies determine some differences in the process of objectification. On the one hand, slaves under Roman law were literally objects, treated under the Law of Things as well as under the Law of Persons (see Joshel 1992, 28–37). On the other, Roman slaves were categorized not by race but by civil status, and this status was capable of change: a central fantasy in the plays of Plautus. The plays themselves lavishly bestow selfhood on male slaves and sometimes on female slaves and freedwomen. Nor were these plays created by “the oppressor” in any direct way; they play with slave stereotypes, and often undercut them. Often the actors speak through their masks powerful critiques of the process of enslavement and tell what it feels like to be a

slave. Female characters have some of the best lines. We do not, however, have any Roman equivalent to the art discussed by Cliff; instead, we have the traces of enactments, and these are what we need to understand.

The plays sometimes display the direct association between female slaves and the spoils of war. *Epidicus* concerns one young woman, Telestis, who has been bought from the spoils of war by a young combatant, and another young woman, Acropolistis, who has been bought and freed by the young man's father Periphanes in the belief that she is his daughter; in reality, she is a *fidicina*, a music girl, palmed off on the father by the slave Epidicus on behalf of the young man, who had wanted her before he saw Telestis. (Compare *Stichus* 380–81, where *fidicinas*, *tibicinas*, / *sambucas* . . . *forma eximia* form part of the cargo of a trading ship—three kinds of female musicians, all of “outstanding shape.”) By the end of the play, Telestis will turn out to be the actual daughter, hence off-limits to the young man. As *Captivi* constantly tests whether slaves are so by nature or by chance, so a subtheme in *Epidicus* tests whether there is any qualitative difference between Telestis and Acropolistis. The main issue is the title character's quest for freedom, vindicated in the final triumphant scene; still, there are these two MacGuffins.

Telestis shows up as a motivating factor near the beginning of the opening scene, as the young man's armor-bearer breaks the bad news to Epidicus (43–44): “He has bought a captive young girl from the spoils, with a charming shape, worthy of a free woman” (*forma lepida et liberali captivam adolescentulam / de praeda mercatust*). The young man himself, on his first entrance, is being reassured about his purchase by a friend (106–8): “You're a fool, Stratippocles. / Are you ashamed because you bought a captive woman from the spoils, born from a good family [*genere prognatam bono*]?” Who would blame you for that?” Stratippocles replies that he has not made her have sex with him (110), although we have heard that he loves her madly (*deperit*, 65). The adjective *liberalis* and the bystander's comment that Telestis is “born from a good family” point up the ambiguous status of sex slaves: their attractiveness stems partly from the titillating fact that they *might* be respectable women, that they *look like* respectable women, even that they *recently were* respectable women, before the annihilation of enslavement erased their status. Nevertheless, captives are loot; when Epidicus reports on the parade of returning soldiers—a triumph-like display, laden with arms and pack animals (208–9)—each has multiple captives with him, specifically sex objects (210–11): “Then what a bunch of captives they led with them! Boys, virgins, / two apiece, three apiece, one had five.” Telestis is part of the loot—even her mother, Philippa, when she comes looking for her, defines her as an object: “She's become the property of the enemy” (*hostiumst potita*, 532; *hostium est potita*, 562). If the triumph is in Rome, then the “enemy,” to Philippa, is Rome. The Roman location of this slave market

is also marked in *Captivi*; the father's trading in captives, none too creditable to him (98–101), is made *de praeda a quaestoribus* ("from the spoils, [sold] by the quaestors," 453).

Telestis herself appears and speaks only to be recognized as the long-lost daughter (637). To Acropolistis is given an excruciating nonrecognition scene, when she is presented to Telestis's mother as Telestis (567–606). Summoned out of the house by a supernumerary female slave with the slave name "Canthara" (Wineglass), Acropolistis confronts Philippa, who rejects her with notable disgust: "Puppies smell one way, pigs smell quite another" (579). (Or, possibly, "Piglets smell one way, sows smell another"—recognizing Acropolistis as a sex worker, not a virgin. Cf. *Truc.* 268.) Telestis's father Periphanes upbraids Acropolistis (584–95):

AC. What do you want me to say? PE. She denies she's
your mother. AC. Let her not be,
if she doesn't want to be: I, on the other hand, even if she
doesn't want me to, will still be [some] mother's daughter
[*ero matris filia*]; 585
it's not fair for me to force this woman of yours to be my mother
if she doesn't want to be.
PE. Then why were you calling me "father"? AC. That's your
fault, not mine.
Was I not supposed to call you father, when you were calling me
your daughter?
This woman, too, even, if she'd call me "daughter," I'd call her
"mother."
This woman denies I'm her daughter: so she's not my mother. 590
.....
AC. Did I do something wrong there, Father? PE. By God, if I
ever hear you
call me father, I'll end your life. AC. I'm not calling you.
When you want to be [my] father, then be; when you don't,
you won't be. 595

Acropolistis's speeches in this scene repeatedly call to account the falseness of natal alienation, the fiction whereby enslaved persons have no legal kin (Patterson 1982, 5–8). Behind Periphanes's bluster lies the truth known to himself, Philippa, and the audience: that Periphanes had raped and abandoned Philippa, a poor girl (*pauperculam memini comprimere*, 540b), and only now, belatedly, wants to find their daughter.³ Acropolistis seemed plausible enough to him, since he had only

really seen Telestis once (600). Acropolistis points out that she indeed has a mother, and she indeed is a daughter (585)—a point that is later emphatically repeated by Epidicus himself, in a line cloaked by its status as a joke (*matris filia est*, 700); these lines echo the more common claims by male slave characters that they, too, are human beings, that they have parents (cf. esp. *Amph.* 28, *humana matre natus, humano patre*, “born of a human mother, a human father”). She shrugs off the desires of Periphanes and Philippa, which for her have produced just another set of commands to obey: “That’s your fault, not mine” (587). Her last words in the scene remind everyone present that Periphanes’s status as father has been entirely capricious (595). After a series of reproaches by Philippa, Periphanes sends both women offstage, calling Acropolistis “this Circe, daughter of the Sun” (604): a powerful witch with an all-seeing father, although Periphanes means the remark as an insult.

Periphanes has had an earlier warning about the futility of his actions, although he does not fully understand it. An unnamed *fidicina* has been palmed off on him as Acropolistis, and he tries to sell her to a soldier; presaging the later scene, the soldier rejects the *fidicina* (490). Checking his facts with the girl, Periphanes gets a tart answer (497–98): “Indeed nobody would have been able to buy me for any money: / I’m free now, more than five years.” The same is now true, she adds, of Acropolistis, whom she knows *tam facile quam me*, “as well as I know myself” (504): unity. These two minor characters represent a large number of freedpeople who circulate in the plays, insisting on the rights their independence gives them.

It is all the more striking when female slaves, the most objectified characters on the stage, speak truth to power. The most spectacular example is that of the unnamed Virgo in *Persa*, who—twice—tells onstage what it feels like to be sold. Her words are enabled by a quadruple mask: a male actor speaks the lines; he is wearing the mask of a respectable girl; but she is a poor girl, the daughter of a *parasitus* (the starving comic sidekick), the only extant example of such a family member for a *parasitus*; and, within the play, the Virgo is made to play an Arabian girl, perhaps enslaved as a war captive, and brought to “Athens” by the equally fictive title character, to be sold to a pimp.⁴ If she is a war captive, she is a former resident of the “Arabian City of Gold” (*Chrysopolim . . . urbem in Arabia*, 506), part of the *praeda* (508), then (or coincidentally?) “stolen and trafficked from deepest Arabia” (*furtivam, abductam ex Arabia penitissuma*, 522); as such, she has been decked out to look “foreign” (158, cf. 464). The remoteness of Arabia is given as a reason why the pimp need fear no rescue effort (541). As the parasite’s daughter, she had hoped for a respectable marriage, which she fears even a fictive sale to a pimp will scotch (383–84). As the Arabian girl, she hopes her (Arabian) father will come to rescue her (618, 653–54), as her (Athenian) father will have to do, to undo

the sale. Her real father has in fact given her to the slave Toxilus “to be used” and to be sold, a process which both men understand to be akin to pimping her (127–46). He has, in effect, sold her—in exchange for a single meal, and in her first scene, earlier in the play, she calls him on it (338).

This scene hinges entirely on her father’s perception of her as “mine” (*quae sis mea*, 340). “Do you take me for your slave-woman or your daughter?” she asks him (341); he claims *imperium* over her (343), and she concedes his *potestas* (344). She draws a vivid comparison between her fear of being sold and a slave’s fear of a beating (360–64):

VI. Think about what I’m saying, Father:

if an owner has threatened a beating to his slave,
even if it’s not going to happen, when the whip is picked up,
when he strips off his shirt, what misery he feels!
I—now, what’s not going to happen, I fear it still.

As she argues, eventually her father says to her, *tace, stulta* (“Shut up, stupid,” 385); so Periphanes says to Acropolitis, before she gives him an earful, *quid stas stupida? quid taces?* (“Why are you standing there like you’re stupid? Why are you silent?” *Epid.* 583).⁵

Like Acropolitis in her unmasking scene, the much-specularized Virgo gets a spectacular chance to speak her mind in the scene in which, disguised as a slave, she is sold to a pimp. Her own lines are full of double meanings, which pull the audience into collusion. Onstage, her double meanings are picked up—sometimes—by Toxilus as he sells her, while he responds with his own double speeches to the pimp and with metatheatrical asides; he appreciates her cleverness, but she shows the audience something else, which he ignores: the pathos of her situation. As always, this is there for the taking, and any one audience member may pick it up or not. Meanwhile, the pimp leaves no doubt what her fate will be as his possession. She is introduced to the pimp on entry by Toxilus in words that echo the first we hear of Telestis; the pimp says, “Is this that stolen virgin?” and Toxilus replies, “God, she certainly looks like a free person, whoever she is” (*specie quidem edepol liberalist, quisquis est*, 546). As with Telestis, *specie . . . liberalist* is presented as a selling point; already, when luring the pimp, Toxilus has described her as “a free-type [*liberalem*] virgin, with a very choice shape” (521); during the sale scene, Toxilus urges, “I think she’s of high birth [*summo genere*]; you’ll make a fortune on her” (651–52); and Toxilus repeats this idea at the end of the sale: “Does she remember freedom enough, or what? She’s going to bring you in a nice haul” (*sat in ut meminit libertatis? dabit haec tibi grandis bolos*, 658). That is, she must be

fresh goods if she thinks this way; men will pay good money to have sex with the former daughter of a *summus vir*; the pimp will be the beneficiary. Toxilus's assessment is prompted by the final exchange between the pimp and the girl, as the Virgin repeats that her family will come for her (655–57):

TO. Do you hear what she says? VI. Because even if our lives are broken,
we still have friends.

DO. Don't cry, please; you'll be free right away—if you fall down
frequently.

Do you want to be mine [*mea*]? VI. As long as I'm not yours too long, I do.

“Even if our lives are broken, we still have friends” ostensibly refers to the (fictive) war in Arabia and truthfully refers to the parasite's poverty and the “friends” (all slaves themselves) who have put her in this position; her tears are fake (for the play-within-the-play) and real (for what her father has done to her), and appropriately so, as the pimp's consolation ends with the crude reminder of how a *meretrix* might possibly become a freedwoman. The pimp, like her father, conceives of her as *mea*; her final words ostensibly express the wishes of the Arabian girl, and in fact express the wishes of the Virgo that her father should hurry up (cf. 724).

The doubleness of the Virgo's speeches within the sale scene is repeatedly marked by asides, both by herself and by Toxilus, that point out and approve of her abilities as a liar (606–8; 610; 622–23; 626; 630; 634–35; 639). She begins the scene with a statement on slavery and truth telling (615–16):

TO. Hey you, wake up. VI. Enough said: although I am a slave [*serva*],
I know my duty, that I should tell the truth about what I'm asked, as I
was told.

This is essentially what Acropolistis says to Periphanes: I will tell you the truth you tell me to tell you. The Virgo hereby repeats to Toxilus that she will perform as stipulated; she hereby tells the pimp that she is a good slave. She is also repeating the promise she gave to her father that she will tell the lies in which he had coached her (378–82); yet, exercising her independence as best she can under restraint, she manages to tell the actual truth at the same time—a constant characteristic of slave speech in Plautus (see Richlin 2014b).

The pimp tells her not to be surprised if they ask her a few questions. She replies, “Why should I be surprised, mister? / My slavery has forbidden me to be surprised at anything bad that happens to me” (620–21). And she weeps; “Don't cry,” says the pimp (622). Her *servitus* is both the state she is acting and the state into which

her father has thrust her; her tears are, again, both fake and real. Toxilus exclaims his approval; the pimp asks her name. *Lucridi nomen in patria fuit*, she replies (624)—“My name in my fatherland was Casha.” Painfully true.

The pimp asks where she was born, and she replies with an old joke: “as my mother / told me, in the kitchen” (630–31). A similar joke appears in the *Life of Aesop* as a smart answer given by a slave during sale, so, like the girl, it has an appropriate pedigree for a slave (*Vit. Aes.* 25); but the kitchen is, in truth, where her father’s plan originated. Toxilus gets only the joke; the pimp gets nothing and carefully explains that he wanted to know her *patria* (635; same structure in *Vit. Aes.* 25). She replies capily, “What *patria* should I have, unless this one where I am now?” (636): just what a good slave should say, whose national bonds are broken with her natal bonds—not that the Arabian girl is happy about this; nor is the Virgo, whose *pater* has sold her. The pimp persists: “But I’m asking about the *patria* that was [*fuit*]” (636); she replies (637–38), “I count for nothing everything that was [*fuit*], since it is past [*fuit*]; / just like a person, when he’s breathed his last, why would you ask him who he was [*fuit*]?” This exchange is a concise illustration of what Orlando Patterson calls “social death” (1982, 38). Toxilus pretends to bully the name of her *patria* out of her, and she answers like a good slave (641): “Since I’m a slave here, this is my *patria*.” Or, she can tell she is in her father’s country, because she is enslaved here.

The pimp keeps up the interrogation: “Was your father captured?” “Not captured,” she replies, “but what he had, he lost [*perdidit*]” (644). Toxilus, still playing salesman, comments to the pimp that this shows she is *bono genere nata*, “born from a good family” (like Telestis), for “she knows nothing but to speak the truth” (645)—acknowledging, perhaps, the Virgo’s comment on what her father has done to her, as well as once again pointing to the salability of lost high status. “High status” here means “truthful,” with reference to slaves’ reputation for lying, already in play (615–16); the Virgo, of course, *is* lying, and both Toxilus and the audience can understand her—they speak her language. The pimp insists on having her father’s name; she replies that her father should be called *Miser* and that she should be called *Misera* (646–47), speaking for the Arabian and his daughter, her father and herself: “Pitiable [male],” “Pitiable [female].”⁶ Finally, the pimp asks about her father’s standing; the Virgo replies, “Nobody was a more welcome guest: / both slaves and free people (*liberique*) used to love him” (648–49). That is, he was a *parasitus*; “love” in the past tense here is sad. Toxilus’s double-edged comment to the pimp echoes *quod habuit, perdidit* in the Virgo’s earlier speech: the father is certainly a miserable man, since “he’s been thoroughly lost himself, and has lost those who bore him goodwill” (*ipsus probe perditust et benevolentis perdidit*, 650).

Here an audience familiar with natal alienation and social death saw it acted out onstage, in a rare major role for a respectable girl—a technically respectable girl, a poor girl (no dowry but her father’s jokes, 389–96), and as such much too close to enslavement. She and the actor whose voice spoke her words told the audience what it feels like to be threatened with a beating, and what it feels like to be sold, far from home one way or the other.

Much more minor slave-woman characters tell the truth in the corners of Plautus’s plays, and sometimes not in double language at all. We might not expect much of these bit-part players; as the pimp in *Curculio* says to the soldier, “I don’t count you of any more worth than my slave-woman who cleans the toilet” (580). We might then take special notice when an *ancilla* speaks, and indeed the outstanding example of empowered speech by a slave-woman in Plautus comes from the wholly obscure Syra in *Mercator* (817–29): a minor character who appears in four scenes, attendant on the neighbor’s wife (670), *nutrix* of her son (809); an old woman of eighty-four (673); by her generic name, a Syrian, considered both the most servile of slaves (*Trin.* 542) and the ugliest of slave-women, fit only for menial work (*Merc.* 415–16; probably *Truc.* 541)—dark skinned, like Syrian male slaves (Starks 2010, 68; cf. Marshall 2006, 148–49). Out of the blue, she launches into a soliloquy decrying the double standard for married men and married women. As will be seen later, slave-women in Plautus usually express not sympathy for *matronae* but rather the reverse.⁷

Syra is not unique; other secondary slave-women, here and there, take center stage. The old woman Staphyla in *Aulularia* defies the miser Euclio and champions his daughter (74–75). Pardalisca in *Casina*, in addition to a substantial soliloquy and several big sung scenes, has a major song reporting on dramatic events, during which she makes her owner’s husband catch her as she pretends to faint (634) and makes him believe she is making a pass at him (635–42). Halisca in *Cistellaria* has a long scene (671–773) that begins with a song (671–703) as she searches for the tracks of those who might have taken the missing *cistella* (who are in plain view onstage) and asks the spectators to point out which way they went (678–79). At the end of her scene, she denies any authority (*ego serva sum*, 765), but (as with the *lena* in *Curculio*) her one appearance onstage includes a meaty musical number. Stephanium in *Stichus*, although she does not have a song, does have a metatheatrical soliloquy addressing the audience (673–82); with her entrance at 673 begins the major party scene.

The prostitutes’ *ancillae*—unnamed in *Menaechmi*, Milphidippa in *Miles*, Scapha in *Mostellaria*, Sophoclidisca in *Persa*, and above all Astaphium in *Truculentus*—are different from most other *ancillae* in that they make conscious use of sexual power. The plays paint no rosy view of this power; quite the contrary,

for, as will be seen later, women's sexual power is both exploited and resented onstage (cf. Dutsch 2008, 60–81). Nor do female slaves, as you might expect, complain about the sexual use made of them by their owners, although male slaves commonly complain of their own exploitation; the substitution of a male slave for the title character in *Casina* epitomizes the situation. A brief run of lines from Bromia's interactions with her owner at the end of *Amphitruo* perhaps constitutes an exception. After her major song describing the thunder-accompanied child-birth of Alcumena, she plays the key role of recognizing Amphitruo, naming him and raising him up from the ground, where he is lying as if dead (1075–77):

[BR.] I'll go up and see, whoever he is. Indeed this is Amphitruo my owner.

Amphitruo. AM. I'm dead. BR. Get up. AM. I'm a goner. BR. Give me your hand. AM. Who is holding me?

BR. Your slave-woman Bromia.

Amphitruo has suffered throughout the play, and particularly toward the end, from confused identity and lack of recognition, especially from the god impersonating his male slave Sosia; here Bromia gives her owner what he wants: proper name and status recognition. At the same time, she is in control, and perhaps she recognizes more than just his face (1082–84):

AM. Do you know I am your owner Amphitruo? BR. I know. AM. Look again now. BR. I know.

AM. This one, she has the only sane mind among everyone in my household.

BR. No, they're all sane, for sure.

In performance, the double recognition in line 1082 would have to be justified by a gesture, arguably the lifting of Amphitruo's *pallium* to reveal a stage phallus; Bromia would then be commenting on Amphitruo as the familiar user of his whole household, a surefire laugh line for an audience with comparable experience.⁸

A more explicit and, to a modern audience, an admirable instance of speaking truth to power is provided by two slave-women in *Truculentus* who barely have names; they are identified only as "Ancilla" and, once again, "Syra" (see Starks 2010, 59–60, on ethnic slurs in this scene). Callicles, husband of the Ancilla's owner, brings them onstage, bound, announcing that he has just interrogated them while they were hung up and flogged (775–79); he wants them to confirm their testimony, or he will kill them (*necem*, 781) or turn them over to the professional

torturers, the “men with the bells” (782; cf. *Ps.* 332). The Ancilla responds ambiguously to his threat: without punctuation, *vis subigit verum fateri ita lora laedunt brachia* (“force presses us to speak the truth the straps are hurting our arms so,” 783). On the surface, this means, “We are forced to speak the truth, because the straps are hurting us.” More simply, it means, “We are forced to speak the truth, which is, that the straps hurt us.” The Ancilla’s testimony reinforces this sense as an important truth later in the interrogation; the two women remain bound throughout the scene (784, 836–38). Meanwhile, as Callicles begins the onstage interrogation, he separates the women and shoves between them (787), telling them not to make signs to each other and blocking their view of each other: “I’ll be the wall” (788).

Callicles wants to know what has happened to the baby his daughter gave birth to as a result of her rape, and the two slave-women tell him plainly. He exclaims, “Look, there it is: women’s wrongdoing” (*vide sis facinus muliebre*, 809). This leads to an exchange between him and the Ancilla (810–15):

AN. God, this kind of badness has more to do with men than with
women;
a man, not a woman made her pregnant. CA. I know that myself.
You were a good guardian to her. AN. The one who is stronger has more
power.
He was a man, he was stronger; he won, he took what he wanted.
CA. And to you, by God, he brought a big beating.
AN. About that, I know myself, even if you were silent, because I felt it
for real.

A few lines later, the Ancilla will point to the cowardly rapist hiding onstage: “I see you” (*video ego te*, 822).

This exchange allows the (actor playing the) slave-woman not only to blame men for rape and its consequences—both to her owner’s daughter and to herself—but to defend herself against a charge of negligence through a critique of power and to testify to her own experience of pain: *de istoc ipsa, etsi tu taceas, reapse experta intellego* (815). She insists on it: *ipsa, reapse, experta*. Her words *plus potest qui plus valet* (812) speak, however briefly, for those in the audience who have been overpowered. At the same time, the owner admits to his knowledge as an impregnator (811, *idem ego istuc scio*). What the two slave-women here have done is to conceal the birth of a baby boy to a raped free woman and to give that baby to a *meretrix*, an act similar to those whereby Selenium became the foster child of a *meretrix* in *Cistellaria* and Casina became an *ancilla*. Maybe this suggests why the play gives

Although the plots of the plays sometimes depend, as in *Truculentus*, on women's networks (see Feltovich 2011; cf. Bradley 1998, 28–29), wives in the plays stand in opposition to their husbands' access to sex objects—slave-women (Casina in *Casina*, Pasicompsa in *Mercator*) or paid prostitutes (Philaenium in *Asinaria*, Erotium in *Menaechmi*). The freedwoman *lena* in *Cistellaria* goes into detail, dispensing sage advice to her friend, the youthful *meretrix* and would-be wife Selenium, she suggests that “our kind” (*hunc ordinem*, 23) should cultivate *amicitia* like the “high-class *matronae*” (22–26). But this reminds her of the lack of *amicitia* between *matronae* and *meretrices*, and she sings (27–37):

48

they sneakily pour cold water [on us].35
 They say we're always doing it with their husbands,
 They say we're their rivals [*paelices*], they want to put us down.

The word *paelex* is used not only by the *lena* here but also by the old slave-woman Syra in *Mercator* reporting to her owner, Dorippa (690), and by the old farmer Daemones in *Rudens*, explaining to two shipwrecked slave prostitutes that his wife will kick him out if he gives them shelter (1047): “She’ll say I’ve taken *paelices* before her eyes.” Prostitutes are necessarily kept outside the home; that wives had to look for rivals first in their own homes is the central point of *Casina*. Indeed, the substitution of the male slave Chalinus for the slave-woman Casina reminds the audience that females were not the only rivals, an aspect that is underscored in the play by Lysidamus’s behavior with his *vilicus* Olympio (452–66, with Chalinus’s comment on his own experiences with the owner). But *paelex* is a derogatory term and, in the plays, restricted to women.

Jealousy of female house slaves must underlie the running joke in *Mercator* that Pasicompsa is too pretty to be an *ancilla* for the young man’s mother (210–11, 395–417). An *ancilla*, argues his father—who fully intends to buy Pasicompsa and have sex with her—should be able to do hard physical labor, cook, and take a beating (396–98); Pasicompsa cannot be his wife’s attendant “respectably enough” (404) because men will harass her in the street (406–9) and accuse his wife and him of pimping her (410–11). The proper *ancilla* for the young man’s mother, says his father, will be (414–16):

some strapping *ancilla*—not a bad woman, but one with an ill shape,
 as befits a *materfamilias*, either a Syrian or an Egyptian:
 she’ll grind grain, cook, finish her weaving, get beaten by the whip.

Later, the neighbor teases Pasicompsa as she weeps, fearing she will be expected to carry heavy loads, tend flocks, or act as a wet nurse (508–9); he then turns a putative discussion of her weaving skills into a speculation on her sexual skills (518–27; cf. James 2010 on Pasicompsa’s deployment of flirtation in this scene). The husband in Caecilius’s *Plocium*, in one of the fragments quoted by Aulus Gellius (2.23.10), complains that his wife “said I frequented my *ancilla* behind her back” and so has nagged him into selling her; the wife now is boasting that she has done her husband out of his *paelex*. It is only surprising that the angry wives in Plautine comedy do not have more to say about *ancillae*, and that *ancillae* are not shown complaining of being flogged by a female owner (although women owners do sometimes talk of beating them: *As.* 888–89, *Mos.* 240). At the same time, the

plays know, and the audience knows, that every *ancilla* is some woman's daughter, and several plots foster the fantasy that a lost girl might be returned to her mother someday (*Cistellaria*, *Epidicus*, *Poenulus*, *Rudens*) or at least to her family (*Curculio*, *Persa*). One of the most cynical aspects of *Casina* is the way it has Casina's owner plot (unknowingly) to marry off her best friend's daughter (as she will turn out to be, 1013) to her son's slave, so that her son, rather than her husband, can use the girl for sex (55–59); in this play, the focus stays on the male slave, who speaks the play's closing speech in drag.

Drag: The Object Objectified

One of the main problems voiced in Plautus's plays is the sexual frustration of male slaves, for whom women represent a scarce commodity (see Joshel 2010, 149–52). This overlaps with the related problem that male slaves are themselves the target of sexual use by owners within the plays, and with the metaproblem of the sexual ambiguity of actors outside the plays, although the most direct evidence for this comes from much later sources.¹¹ Juvenal puts it most plainly (3.96–97): watching an actor play a woman, “you’d say everything was empty and smooth / below his belly [*ventriculum*], and split by a slender crack.” The desire voiced by male characters onstage for female characters, then, is somewhat ambiguous, as will be seen, and merges with the unspoken desire of male slave characters for other male characters. *Pueri*, after all, are specularized onstage just like attractive female characters; the soldiers in the *Epidicus* triumph are bringing home *pueri* as well as *virgines*. Dorota Dutsch argues (2008, 181) that the Plautine *histrion* is “in an imaginary space between genders.” The prologue speaker of *Casina* capitalizes on the blurring of role with actor, on the blurring of Chalinus with Casina, and on the blurred masculinity of actors/slaves, when he makes his parting joke (79–86): the “exposed girl” (*puellam expositiciam*) will commit no act of *stuprum* during the play, but afterward, “if you hand over the cash, as I suspect, / will become a bride [*ibit nuptum*] on the spot, and won’t stand upon ceremony.” *Nuptum* here, as elsewhere, is a joke for “have sex” (cf. *Cist.* 43–45). This is another slave/actor joke—bitter, like the others (cf. *Amph.* 26–31; *Capt.* 52; *Cist.* 784–85).¹² Nor, beneath the mask, could the audience be certain which of the actors were slaves, which free: another important ambiguity (see Marshall 2006, 86–89). Indeed, this would add another layer to what Marshall, following Jacques Lecoq, calls the performance of “mask and counter-mask” (2006, 154): the actor, already playing a role that undercuts the expectations raised by his mask type, can also put into play the gender of “the actor,” in that time-honored role, “himself” (think of Steve Coogan). The gendered experience of members of the audience would have affected

how they reacted to what they saw onstage, and the prominence of male slaves onstage would have addressed in particular the male slaves in the audience, as was set forth by Barbara Gold in her discussion of *Casina* (1998, 21).

Thus, although many of the lines considered above speak specifically for women, producing slave-women and freedwomen onstage as feeling subjects, some of them, and many others in the plays, produce a more ambiguous effect, almost campy, in the sense voiced by one female impersonator: “Camp has got to be flip. A camp queen’s got to think faster than other queens. . . . She’s got to have an answer to anything that’s put to her. . . . She’s sort of made light of a bad situation” (Newton [1972] 1979, 110–11)—that is, a situation in which sex has to be hidden in plain sight. Bromia’s joke to Amphitruo speaks for all the *familiares*, and the fact that the line is delivered by a male playing a female adds to its force. To understand Plautine comedy, I would propose a stripped-down definition of “drag” as the playing of a female role by a male onstage such that both actor and audience share the consciousness both of the double gender and of what it might imply. This would lay no claim at all to the highly complex system of gendered meaning described by Esther Newton for the drag queens she interviewed in the 1960s. Later sources indicate strongly that there was a perceived connection in the Roman culture of their times between being an actor, enacting the female, and availability for sexual use; the joke at *Casina* 84–86, I think, indicates that this connection was already in place. Without contemporary sources from the time of Plautus, and no first-person accounts from his actors—no time machine for Esther Newton—it is not possible to know what drag truly meant to them. Drag today, only forty years after Newton, has taken on new inflections (see Meyer 2010), so we cannot project, for example, Maecenas’s beloved Bathyllus onto the actor who played Bromia well over a century earlier.¹³ Such actors, moreover, shared the stage with actors who played the *cinaedus*, like the boy Paegnium in *Persa* (804–17) or, as Timothy Moore has demonstrated, like Sosia in *Amphitruo*, who does a little Ionic shimmy as he complains how hard it is to have to “endure all from his master” (166–75).¹⁴

Certainly ethnographic studies of U.S. drag and camp in the twentieth and the early twenty-first centuries have been at pains to locate these phenomena at a particular historical moment and in a particular relationship to contemporary sexuality. Esther Newton is an anthropologist, and her classic study emphasizes what we cannot do with Roman comedy: she talked to the performers themselves and watched them perform. Despite the crucial differences, there are also some interesting points in common with Roman theater. The profession is seen by the performers themselves as a “source of dishonor” ([1972] 1979, 3), one that “ministers to the needs for dealing with an identity that is well defined but loaded with

contempt" (105). The performance is constituted by its audience (37), which Newton identifies, on the model of audiences for the blues, as a "committed" audience (63)—an audience in tune with the performance. The performers "do not consider themselves to be females and neither do audiences" (57), and both performers and observers insist on metatheatricity as an essential element in drag shows (65; 109, "showing that it is a show [is] the heart of drag as camp"); in a footnote aside, Newton observes that "many impersonators wear masks of masks" (91n7). Another widely appreciated element in camp is that the performers often insult the audience (56, 81), sarcasm being a favorite weapon (112).

The big difference lies in Newton's definition of drag queens as "professional homosexuals" who "represent the stigma of the gay world" (3); along with camp, they are "symbols of homosexuality" (100). Roman slaves were stigmatized, all right, and that stigma involved their use for sex; but slavery obfuscates volition and desire. Not all actors were slaves; some actors owned other actors, as Marshall argues. Drag exists on the Plautine stage but is grounded in slavery.

Newton carried out her fieldwork in 1965–66, for a 1968 dissertation that was first published in 1972; she writes with a strong consciousness that she is living on the cusp of a great change. Writing over thirty years later, Moe Meyer, likewise an anthropologist, explicitly claims Newton as his model (2010, 7), and, like her, aspires to (re)claim performers as agents (10). His is a reclamation project, for the essays he collected in 2010 were written in response to the intelligentsia's appropriation of drag and camp in the 1980s and 1990s to serve as the model for the performativity of gender, a sort of harbinger of the social constructionist good news (cf. the theoretical framework in Gold 1998). Meyer wants to reclaim camp for gay men.

As with Newton's study, this sets his idea of drag and camp strictly apart from anyone other than the "homosexual" in the Anglophone world after Wilde. Camp is "the production of gay social visibility" (1); "camp embodies a specifically gay cultural critique" (39); camp is a "gesture schema" based on the gay male body (85). Nor is camp intrinsically funny (40).

On the other hand, Meyer has a strong sense of camp as political critique: he compares camp to Brechtian theater (36) and places it as part of the resistance created by power, in Foucauldian terms (44, cf. 107). He sees camp as closely related to parody, whose "dependence upon an already existing text in order to fulfill itself is reason for its traditional denigration" (41)—a thought-provoking model for Roman New Comedy. Camp belongs to the "marginalized and disenfranchised" (41), and camp performance can only be understood in combination with its audience as a "signifying gestalt" (45, 95)—much like Newton's grounding of

drag shows in the gay community. His great lament is that the makers of camp have been “erased in representation” (46–50), which certainly applies to Plautine actors in the long-standing tradition of reading the plays.

Similar claims of local specificity unsurprisingly characterize accounts of cross-dressed theatrical modes across time and space. Edward Li grounds Chinese opera’s cross-dressed actors in the long history of the “mutual contamination of the real and the fictional” in Taoist thought (2003, 161); he quotes instructions by early modern performers on the necessity for the actor to transform himself altogether: “We who take our body as female must at the same time transform [*hua*] our heart-mind [*xin*] into female. . . . I never take it as playacting but as real. People then see it as real” (164). Li firmly distinguishes this both from social constructionism and from the Stanislavski method, emphasizing the strength of the concept of transformation in Taoist-Buddhist thought. He juxtaposes this with (much earlier) moralizing texts that relegate performers in *mixed* male-female theater to “an inferior rank, compared with animals” (169); female impersonation is generally unproblematic. The joke from *Casina* about the possible after-show purchase of the actor who plays the girl has tantalizing parallels in the world of Chinese opera in the nineteenth century; Andrea Goldman explains how a connoisseur might buy a boy out of his contract and documents the “eroticized and feminizing gaze” to which these actors were subjected (2009, 16).¹⁵ Benzi Zhang, for whom pre-modern events occur somewhere in the “mists of time” (2011, 297), bases his account of opera in the suicide of Leslie Cheung on April 1, 2003—the actor who played the tormented diva in *Farewell My Concubine* (1993), and “one of the few superstars who has woven his homosexual life into art” (296). The diva in the movie was not supposed to fall in love with her leading man; Leslie Cheung jumped to his death from the twenty-fourth floor of a Hong Kong hotel. For Zhang, the story of Cheung and his role forms part of a story of post-Mao homophobia in China. He is clear that “Western gay studies” do not adequately address what he still calls “homosexual desires.” No overlaps here with the Plautine stage, or Esther Newton’s drag queens. Yet Zhang sees the predicament of Cheung’s character as “double impersonation” (301), a useful concept for the slave actor. Zhang’s focus on the specific experience of one man points out yet another layer in our ignorance: we can speculate about “the Plautine actor” but have no idea how an individual’s desires might have meshed or fought with the role of a slave onstage.

That ancient drama incorporates drag even in the limited sense I propose has rarely been systematically considered, although arguments have been made for the transgressive nature of men playing women in Greek drama.¹⁶ For Roman comedy,

many have asserted a sort of naturalized fiction of male as female, a common suspension of disbelief. Apart from cues to a disparity between appearance and role (“What big girls!” says their long-lost father, *Poen.* 1167), we might suspect that audience members, in various ways, in fact derived enjoyment from a consciousness of male impersonation of the female; three hundred years later, Juvenal said women found it sexy (*S.* 6.63–75)—or, as Erik Gunderson puts it, “the satire insists that if you ask Bathyllus and the ladies, then they would answer unambiguously that this is all hot, hot, hot” (2005, 235). As I have argued elsewhere (2014a, 175), “Thinking of gender as performative, we might reflect that, onstage, each primping whore—and Scapha, too—is a woman with a man inside, played by a man with a woman inside, for behind her mask is the actor’s face, and inside his mouth are her words”: slave-woman drag.

The plentiful commentary in Latin on the naturalism of gender performance onstage comes from much later periods and certainly reflects the habituation of Roman audiences to the *pantomimus*. Marshall (2006, 92–93) points to possible “multicultural influences” on the performance styles of two comic actors described by Quintilian in the first century CE, including their skill at various female roles (*Inst.* 11.3.178–80). The actor’s ability to go both ways was still being singled out for praise in the sixth century CE, when the rhetorician Choricus of Gaza described the dancer as “trying to persuade the audience not that he is representing something, but that he really *is* what he allegedly represents” (*Dialexis* 12, p. 248 F.-R., as quoted and translated in Russell 1983, 83). Roman unease with this skill, however, is densely attested in Latin rhetorical handbooks going back to Cicero and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (Richlin 1997; Gunderson 2000, 111–48), and there is no source other than Plautus to tell us whether a Plautine audience watching slave actors viewed the enactment of female characters naturalistically. Indeed, to perceive these female figures as female is much easier when you are reading the text rather than watching a performance; this was so for Plautus’s later Roman readers, and a fortiori for us. That is, the Roman literati who, long after Plautus, took up the *study* of comedy—explicitly, to them, “early”—occupy the place Moe Meyer ascribes to the American literati who took up the study of camp: they repurposed it, erasing the original practitioners (2010, 46–50). Likewise, a fortiori and then some, so have all the long line of Plautus scholars ever since.

What an actor could do onstage might be suggested by an interchange in *Truculentus* between the prostitute’s slave-woman Astaphium and the rustic slave Truculentus.¹⁷ One of the few places in Latin that refers to sex between women at all, never mind between female owners and slave-women, it suggestively incorporates a double play on words. Astaphium, in the big song that precedes this scene (*Truc.* 209–55), is one of the few female characters to make use of the standard

Plautine markers for privileged speech (211–12): “Finally, I’m alone. Now indeed, according to my own judgment, / I’ll speak freely [*libere*] what I want and what I like [*quae lubebit*].”¹⁸ So bold in her speech, she might have been, to a watching *ancilla*, what Epidicus was to Chrysalus (*Bacch.* 214)—particularly so, at this moment, to an *ancilla* who loved women; unless Astaphium’s mask slips here. She says to the truculent Truculentus (262–64):

AS. Suppress/rape your anger/your female owner. TR. No, you rape
yours, by God—you’re used to it [*quae solita*’s].
You shameless thing, to talk a country boy into a sex crime just for fun.
AS. I said “anger” [*eiram*].

Her lead line, *comprime sis eiram*, offers her interlocutor the chance for a double mishearing: *comprime* as “suppress” or “rape,” *eiram* as “female owner” or “anger.” What voice did the actor playing Astaphium use when he said *eiram* the second time? All he would have to do onstage today is drop his voice an octave from an in-character falsetto to a butch basso in order to play the man inside the woman (cf. Juvenal 6.O.25–26, the Triphallus wearing the mask of Thais—same joke).¹⁹ Something for everyone, a comedy tonight. This kind of move would only be another instance of the Plautine metatheatricality so fully documented since Niall Slater’s *Plautus in Performance*.

Slave-women onstage, then, often literally embody the male slave’s frustration; once again, *Casina* does so most explicitly. The prologue speaker famously editorializes on the plotline, which centers on slave marriage—not possible in Roman law; he ventriloquizes the audience (67–74):

There are those here who I now believe are saying among themselves,
“My God, I ask you, what is this? Slave weddings?
Are slaves going to take a wife, or ask for this?
They’ve brought in something new here, that never happens anywhere.” 70
But I say it does happen—in Greece and Carthage,
and here in our country—in Apulia;
why, they pay more attention to slave weddings there
than they do even to free (*liberales*) weddings.

The structure of lines 71–72 allows for a pause to let the audience think about the fact that enslavement breaks marriage bonds still felt as such, and that persons living as slaves still form attachments, as best they can. This would mean more to some audience members than others.

What it meant to some male slaves is immediately acted out in the opening scene, a verbal duel between Olympio, the *vilicus* on the family plantation, and Chalinus, the slave of the family son: both want to marry the young slave-woman Casina. Olympio, as befits his status as slave driver, makes a series of threats against Chalinus involving forced labor and starvation on the farm (115–30). But the climactic threat is that Chalinus will be forced to witness Olympio's nights with Casina. In order to make his threat vivid, Olympio ventriloquizes his imaginary bride, as Chalinus will do offstage, later in the play; the substitution of male slave for missing woman, male voice for female, dramatizes a sexual hunger (130–40):

[OL.] After that, when you'll be tired and starving, 130
 I'll see to it that at night you get the bedding you deserve.
 CH. What'll you do? OL. You'll be shut up close in the window
 frame,
 where you'll be able to listen [*auscultare*] when I'm kissing her
 [*illam ausculer*].
 When she'll be saying to me, "My darling, my Olympio,
 my life, my little honey, my good time, 135
 let me kiss your little eyes, my pleasure,
 please let me love you, my holiday,
 my sparrow chick, my dove, my bunny" —
 while these words are being said to me, then you, *furcifer*,
 like a mouse, you'll be squirming in the middle of the wall. 140

Chalinus is subordinated here precisely in his role as helpless eavesdropper, emphasized by his cage-like imprisonment in the casement; he must be envisioned as squeezed between the shutters (a feature of later erotic poetry, Horace *Carm.* 1.25.1, Ovid *Am.* 1.5.3), and the window bars that appeared in contemporary agricultural architecture and in security-minded houses in Plautus's own plays (Cato *Agr.* 14.2, cf. Columella 8.3.3; Plautus *Mil.* 379, cf. *Per.* 570–72). Like the attendant slaves at parties—like Paegnium at the end of *Persa*—Chalinus would have to witness a more powerful male having sex, here with an *ancilla* he desperately wants for himself.²⁰

Male slaves in the plays often have this voyeur's position onstage, watching their owners go into a clinch with their beloved prostitutes; often they voice a sort of detached disgust, like Palinurus in *Curculio* or Milphio in *Poenulus*. Libanus and Leonida in *Asinaria* go further, extorting their own turn with Philaenium and making her beg them in words like those Olympio invents for Casina (664–68, 691–96); each time, their owner exclaims against it, and each time one of them

smoothly as the party progresses; Lemniselenis shows too much concern for her former owner, the pimp (now her *patronus*), as Toxilus and his allies taunt and, eventually, beat him. In Toxilus's view, he is himself the *patronus* of the freed Lemniselenis—a view based on emotional rather than factual justice—and he upbraids her, playing the owner (835–40):

TO. So you watch out for a beating and follow me. 835

You're supposed to be obedient [*dicto audientem*] to me, for, by God,
without me
and my rescue, this guy would have turned you out as a street hooker
[*prostibilem*] any day now.
But that's how these freedmen [*pars libertinorum*] are: unless he's gone
up against his *patronus*,
he doesn't seem free enough to himself, nor prudent enough, nor
respectable enough,
unless he's done the job, unless he's talked back to him, unless he's
been thankless to the one he ought to thank. 840

Lemniselenis has made a spectacular appearance onstage in this final climactic scene; she is what we have all been waiting to see; she has engaged in a warm embrace; we might expect that the actor playing her was dressed up accordingly. Yet here, lecturing her, Toxilus slips into a generic masculine: *advorsatust* (838), *liber*, *honestus* (839), *ingratus*, *repertust* (840). The male body of the actor twitches inside the Marilyn costume. The gender interchangeability of the slave as sex object gets a little push here. "I'm your *patronus*, obviously, because I'm the one who gave this guy the cash for you," insists Toxilus (842); but he isn't her *patronus*, and she isn't a she.²²

Drag, then, gives a twist to the specularization of the female characters onstage. What did the audience see in the masked kiss, the costumed clinch? Onstage cues, like Toxilus's "nothing sweeter," gauge the heat of these clinches; for example, Palinurus's line, *viden ut misere moliuntur? nequeunt complecti satis* ("Do you see how grimly they're grinding away? They can't embrace each other enough," *Curc.* 188). Compare Bacall to Bogart in *To Have and Have Not*, as he holds a fainting blonde: "What are you trying to do, guess her weight?" Envy shows through—or jealousy. The "drooling speeches" of parasites recur in carnal form, spoken by young men, as their beloveds parade before them onstage: how beautiful she is! The grudging slave and the audience are asked to collude in admiration. In the dressing scene in *Mostellaria*, as Philematium literally specularizes herself—at one point, she kisses the mirror (265)—so her lover specularizes her within the diegesis,

encouraging the audience to do the same. Her pretty-girl makeup, however, covers a mask that covers an actor (see further Dutsch in this volume).

This is a spectacle repeated in several plays: the brothel parade in *Pseudolus*, the bathing scene in *Poenulus*, the arrival of two shipwrecked girls dressed in wet rags in *Rudens*. A beauty pageant: it must have been more parody than showgirl tableau, with its grotesque costumes and masks.²³ Displays of tricked-out slave-women were a familiar sight in the ancient city, staged on the platforms of the slave dealers in the same public spaces in which the plays were staged, while the famous panorama of the Forum in *Curculio* tells you just where to find prostitutes, mostly male (473, 482, 484, and Dutsch in this volume on *Truculentus*). Comedy gives its audience a conscious *reproduction* of such a sight, a representation of it, funny (or daring, or sexy, or edgy) because it is not-it.

Moreover, at points in these scenes, actors dressed as slave-women or freed-women denounce women as foul and disgusting: Scapha in *Mostellaria* says old women use perfume because they smell bad (273–78), an opinion enthusiastically endorsed by the peeping lover (279–81); Anterastilis in *Poenulus*, at the end of the song she and her sister sing as they finish their bath, compares women to smelly fish (240–45):

ANT. Sister, think, please, how they say we	240
are just like pickled fish,	
without any charm and without sweetness:	
unless they are soaked in a lot of water for a long, long time,	
they stink, they're salty, so you wouldn't want to touch them;	
that's how we are.	245

As Dutsch says, “Dirt and stench are not uncommonly attributed to ‘women’ in Plautus.”²⁴ Here is Anterastilis, viewed by other players onstage as a desirable woman, a scarce commodity; herself a spectacle at the moment, part of an elaborate song and (possibly) dance number (Moore 2012, 128)—and the voice that comes out of the mouth hole of her mask sings a verse about how women smell.

Yet Palaestra in *Rudens*, even as she sings her song, dripping wet, continuing into a recognition scene with her fellow soaking-wet prostitute that is surely played for laughs, puts across a statement of enslaved misery. She wonders how she or her parents have offended the gods, to have suffered such a loss (187–97a), “dressed in this costume,” as she entertainingly specifies (*hoc ornatu ornatam*, 187): her plight, the slave actor’s plight. And she ends with the thought of her parents, who do not know where she is (216–16a), and, like the Virgo, dwells on the ineluctable fiction of enslavement (217–19):

I was absolutely born free [*leibera ego prognata fui*], and what's the point
 if I was [*fui*]?
 Now how am I a slave any less than if I'd been born a slave [*serva*]?
 I've done no good whatsoever, anyhow, to those who raised me to be
 theirs.

Patterson uses Palaestra as an example of the slave's "tendency to express psychological violence against himself" (1982, 12).

Like the Virgo, slaves in the market were dressed up for sale. Later sources record the efforts expended by slave dealers to trick out their merchandise so as to appear sexually alluring, particularly to erase the signs of impending manhood from young male slaves (Harrill 2006, 128–32, mostly from Pliny and Galen). In the *Life of Aesop*, the ugly Aesop is positioned on the platform between an attractively dressed and combed musician and a schoolteacher whose thin legs were hidden by a long robe—two *boupaidēs*, “boys the size of oxen” (*Vit. Aes.* 20–21).²⁵ Slavery not only erased an enslaved male's former status but also affected his gender, and in many possible ways. Jealousy, rather than envy, as noted earlier, might motivate the male slave onstage watching his owner—characters or actors; forced love might still be love, enacted here onstage at the dawn of the bromance. Conspicuous by its absence from New Comedy is any pederastic romance; no *puer* is bought to be set up in an exclusive relationship as is Pasicompsa in *Mercator*; yet *pueri* like Paegnium in *Persa*, or Phaniscus in *Mostellaria*, or Pinacium in *Stichus*, can be pert and flirtatious in just the same way as characters like Astaphium. Indeed, Paegnium, whose name means “Plaything” and who is, after all, owned by another slave, not only flirts with the *ancilla* Sophoclidisca but does a sexy dance in the final scene, aimed at the pimp; arguably, his onstage quarrel with the slave Sagaristio could be played as a flirtation (*Per.* 272–300), as could, on a smaller scale, the exchange between Phaniscus and his fellow slave Pinacium at *Mostellaria* 885–98. Quintilian famously reproved Afranius, who wrote half a century after Plautus, for incorporating pederastic themes in his plays (*Inst.* 10.1.100), but in a way they were there onstage all along, behind one mask or another.

Conclusions

Dorota Dutsch, in an extensive analysis of women's speech in Roman comedy, concludes (2008, 230–31) that

the poet in his writing and the performer in his acting would both have reproduced their perceptions of women's speaking. The man would thus

have briefly become the woman's mirror, and even though this would have been a distorting mirror, for a moment *he* was a surface that reflected *her*. . . . It seems, then, that distorted though it is, the feminine discourse of Roman comedy can be read as the resonance of a woman's voice in a man's. . . . The notion of a *chôric* split would aptly describe the interval between the actor's identity and his female role, the space between "his" body and "her" words.

At least sometimes in the plays, as we have seen, object turns into subject, and slave-women and freedwomen characters speak specifically on the basis of the experience of real slave-women and freedwomen. At the same time, the actor can show through. We might think of this in the terms set up by Barbara Gold in her study of *Casina*, as a difference between "non-illusionary and illusionary cross-dressers, those who call attention to their performance as women and those who do not" (1998, 20), but either-or is perhaps too simple.

It is extremely difficult for modern readers to reconstruct the gender positions of the people involved in the original performances of Roman comedy: actors, playwright, audience. There has been too much water under the theatrical bridge, and this is not a slave society, while our not-that-distant experience as a slave society interferes with our understanding of Roman slavery—although C. W. Marshall has argued that we might get at the circumstances that formed the interpretation of the Plautine audience by bearing in mind the sex trafficking that does form part of our world now (2013). Within the theater today, the propriety of men or boys playing female characters in restagings of plays originally so staged is a politically charged issue, due to the reiteration of arguments that men and boys onstage make better women than women do (see Ferris 1993). To restage Plautus's plays with any historical fidelity now, the audience members would have to be trained to be slaves, freed slaves, slave owners—all overlapping categories; to feel slavery as a given part of life; to reconstitute their own gender within those historical conditions.²⁶ They would have to learn, and feel, the experience of a lifetime of continuous populace-ravaging warfare going on all around them.

The actors, too, inside their masks and costumes, were part of this world. These were not the *tekhnitai Dionusou* of the Hellenistic theater, with honorific inscriptions and international reputations. In 200 BCE, Rome had no history of citizen performances, as far as we can see; perhaps a mythical one, as later retailed by Livy. It does not manifest itself in Plautus's plays. The actors and the matter of the plays dwell on the reality of slaves' lives—mostly, the lives of male slaves. The slave Chrysalus in *Bacchides* says that he loves the play *Epidicus* "like myself" (*aeque ac me ipsum amo*, 214), a multilevel metatheatrical joke of which at least one

point is that the character Epidicus, a tricky slave who wins his freedom in the play's final scene, is Chrysalus's role model. So Chrysalus, so Epidicus might have spoken to male slaves in the audience. Female slaves in the audience would have had many fewer lines that spoke to their experiences and desires, and even some of those would have been usurped by the half-hidden presence of the male actor behind the mask, the replacement of drag. Like all slaves in the audience, however, they sometimes had the plotline to keep them warm: My father is coming for me. I am not forgotten; I am not lost. I am someone's daughter.

NOTES

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1. Scholars sometimes remark in passing that theater audiences were predominantly male (Gold 1998, 21, "the predominantly and normatively Roman male audience" of *Casina*; for "the shows" in the time of Juvenal, Gunderson 2005, 235, "an audience of 'the people,' who will have been mostly men"). To my knowledge, there is no reason to think so for any period, although "normatively" is worth discussion. Cf. Marshall 2006, 75–82; Moore 1998. On the plays as testimony to "a significant female presence in the servile population of the second century as a whole," see Bradley 1998, 28–29. On the various subject positions in the audience and their interpellation by the plays, see Konstan 2013 on "split vision" (Menander); Rabinowitz 1993, 11–12 (Greek tragedy); Richlin 2013.

2. This scholarly essay, often reprinted, is well worth seeking out in its original venue in the radical feminist journal *Heresies*, where Hattie Gossett's poem "Is It True What They Say about Colored Pussy?" appears in a sidebar on page 40. Gossett's line, "guess who is seen sneaking out back to the cabins?" tells one of the open secrets also told in Plautus's plays.

3. For a close analysis of this scene, arguing that lines 587–88 hint at Acropolitis's suspicious status as a *fidicina* bought and freed by the old man—as if "father" and "daughter" here meant "Daddy" and "Baby"—see Slater 2001.

4. On class, disguise, and female speech in this scene, see Marshall 1997; for this scene in the context of others in which Plautus elicits sympathy for female characters in distress, see Marshall 2006, 189–92; for the geographical dislocations mapped in this scene as a trademark of sex trafficking, see Marshall 2013, 180–81.

5. These "shut up" lines recur in the plays, often addressed to women; see Dutsch 2008, 46.

6. On female characters' use of this adjective to describe themselves in Plautus, see Dutsch 2008, 108–10.

7. See Dutsch 2008, 118–19, on slave-women who see themselves as extensions of their female owners. On Syra's speech, see Dunsch 2014; James 2012; and esp. John Starks, who sets it in the context of Syrian-ness in Plautus generally, arguing that "the comedian employs Syra's name as a first indicator and continuous signifier that she and her ethnicity should symbolize long-suffering slavery for the Roman audience" (2010, 63).

8. On the possible use of some form of phallus in Roman comedy, see Marshall 2006, 62–64, 66.

9. What else *verna* attests to: cf. Plutarch *Elder Cato* 21, for the story that Plautus's contemporary, the elder Cato, made his male slaves pay for sexual access to his female slaves (although he also bought young slaves from the war captives).

10. For a survey of the evidence on the *nutrix* as object and subject during the principate, see Joshel 1986.

11. On the actor's *infamia* as attested from the late Republic onward, see Duncan 2006, 124–59; Dutsch 2008, 179–84, with remarks on audience/actor as subject/object; Edwards 1997.

12. A reader for this volume remarked, "The interpretation of *Casina* 84–6 as a homosexual joke is certainly novel," but this interpretation goes back at least to Forehand 1973, 236, 255n11; for more recent instances, see Gold 1998, 23n20; O'Bryhim 2001, 153; Dutsch in this volume. Forehand's tentative hints on this point were dismissed by Niall Slater (1985, 71n2—other fish to fry), but his essay is well worth a look. It was published in the second of two *Arethusa* issues devoted to the then brand-new study of ancient women (viz. the appearance of "women's rights" in its wrap-up, 254), and both its tone and its overview of the state of the question back to the nineteenth century provide a fascinating measure of the distance traveled since the advent of gender studies. MacCary and Willcock (1976, 110 ad loc.) still seem puzzled by the inconcinnity between the gender of actor and role—careless, but "merely a scurrilous joke, designed to please the male audience." Theirs was the first school text of a play that, as Forehand points out, was in the nineteenth century considered both unsuitable for study and unworthy in itself, *Casina* and *Truculentus* both being "studies in pornography," as one handbook put it. Ironically, this handbook (1895, reprinted 1966, cited in Forehand 1973, 255n1) was by J. W. Mackail, usually broad-minded. MacCary and Willcock's text, under the aegis of the series editors E. J. Kenney and Patricia Easterling, brought *Casina* into the curricular mainstream and spawned countless college productions, happily scurrilous.

13. For context and sources on the love of Maecenas for the pantomime dancer Bathyllus, see Mankin 1995, 230–31 (on Horace *Epodes* 14.9); Duncan 2006, 194–96; Lada-Richards 2007, 59 and *passim*.

14. See the important discussion, with reference to earlier work by Maurizio Bettini and Thomas Habinek, at Moore 2012, 106–14.

15. See Goldman 2009, 2–3, 18, 26, 46–47, 49; and cf. Goldman 2012. Her work depicts a theatrical world more recognizably akin to the fan culture of the *pantomimus* but mainly makes clear how much we do not know about the social circumstances of the *palliata*.

16. Bassi 1995; Rabinowitz 1998; Zeitlin 1985; cf. Duncan 2006, 32–47; and see Callier 2014; Taaffe 1993 on drag in Aristophanes. In an essay foundational for theater studies, Sue-Ellen Case argues that Greek drama erases actual women and that “these roles should be played by men. . . . [They] are properly played as drag roles” (1985, 324), the original players having been “male actors in drag” (318). Senelick (2000) skips from snapshots of Athens to late antiquity. On Alcmena in *Amphitruo*, see (briefly) Christenson 2000, 38, and the extended study in Bleisch 1997.

17. Cf. Fraenkel 2007, 25; Dutsch in this volume on this scene in full.

18. On *lubet* and its cognates as markers of free speech, see Richlin 2014b.

19. See Newton (1972) 1979, 48, 100–101, on such tactics in 1960s U.S. drag, including a drop in vocal register, as part of a characteristic opposition between inside/outside; cf. Dutsch in this volume on the juxtaposition of body and costume.

20. See also Clarke (1998, 88) on “onlooker figures” and the Warren cup, and for examples and discussion of painted scenes of men and women in bed with slaves in attendance (97–105). At least one elite writer later found the idea of male slaves’ voyeurism titillating (Martial 11.104.13). In *Casina* we see what it looks like from the forced eavesdropper’s point of view. The idea that a slave routinely slept in an owner’s bedroom seems to be largely a modern idea, with little foundation in ancient texts, but slaves are sometimes posted outside the door, thus within earshot; see Riggsby 1997, 44–46.

21. See Fraenkel (1920) 1964 (a republication of the now-scarce 1920 article cited at Fraenkel 2007, 298n38; the 1909 *Glotta* article by F. Skutsch there cited holds, in passing, that *puerile officium* refers to children’s games—he had some trouble explaining the sense of *officium* here). Fraenkel agreed with Skutsch on this point (1964, 47–48n4), although in Fraenkel 2007, 32, the translators have imported “what a child does” as a translation of *puerile officium* (neither the German nor the Italian had any translation at all here). De Melo translates “do a boy’s part,” with no comment (2011, 199). Similarly, pure-minded readers going back at least to Riley’s 1852 Bohn translation have taken *As.* 703 to refer to leapfrog; cf. Dutsch 2008, 52–53, pointing out that the owner here is made to use the woman’s word *amabo*, “please.” Cf. *Aul.* 637 *consuetum*; *Capt.* 867 *consuetu’s puer*; *Ps.* 1177 *solitu’s*. . . *puer*, 1178 *solitun es—scin quid loquar?*

22. On the obedience expected of a freed sex slave, and the concomitant erasure of the freed slave’s volition, also at *Mos.* 204–5, see Marshall 2013, 192–94.

23. See Marshall 2006, 64–65, on big comic breasts; 2006, 130, 152, on women’s masks; Dutsch in this volume on masks, cosmetics, and body paint, esp. on “Astaphium the actor/character as a grotesque assemblage” and the “actor’s autonomy from the female appearance.”

24. Dutsch 2008, 158; on self-loathing and self-objectification in this bathing scene, see Dutsch 2008, 42–43, 156–61, and, on Scapha’s speech, Dutsch in this volume.

25. “Two young bucks,” in Lloyd Daly’s translation (in Hansen 1998, 119).

26. Not that this is a realistic goal for modern productions; see Gamel 1999 on the futility of “archaeological correctness” and the need for plays now to address audiences now.

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Music and Gender in Terence's *Hecyra*

TIMOTHY J. MOORE

The plays of Plautus and Terence consistently associate music with women. Female characters in Roman comedy are more likely to perform to accompaniment than are their male counterparts, and actors playing women perform some of the genre's most elaborate polymetric songs. Plautus refers twice to the *vox muliebris* in one of his musically most complex passages (*Rud.* 233–4).¹ Not surprisingly, therefore, Plautus and Terence often use music to strengthen messages they send about women and their relationships with men. Sometimes these messages challenge assumptions about gender and gender hierarchy. In *Casina* the control of meter by Cleostrata and her allies reinforces the surprising power they have over the play's male characters. Unexpected use of music underlines the stunning subjection of her lovers to Phronesium in *Truculentus*. An unusual lack of music draws attention to the unique character and situation of Thais in *Eunuchus*. Both Artemona (*Asinaria*) and Nausistrata (*Phormio*) make clear how much they have overturned their husbands' power by introducing new musical patterns.² But nowhere is the connection between music and gender clearer than in *Hecyra*.

Scholarly opinions on *Hecyra* have varied widely, from dismissal by some scholars to Gilbert Norwood's assessment that the play is "the purest and most perfect example of classical high comedy . . . which dramatic literature can offer."³ About three features of the play, however, there is consensus. First, all agree that Terence stretched the conventions of New Comedy in this play.⁴ Second, numerous scholars have observed that at the core of this play lie concerns about knowledge and ignorance, both of the characters and of the audience. Thus, critics interested in Terence's response to his Greek original, while differing in details, are virtually

unanimous in believing that by removing Apollodorus's prologue Terence kept the audience in the dark about events they would have understood in the Greek original;⁵ and several scholars have noted how important in the play is the ignorance both of characters, especially the slave Parmeno and the *senes* Laches and Phidippus, and of the spectators.⁶ Third, almost all who have written on *Hecyra* have noticed the play's unparalleled interest in its women characters.⁷

Several scholars have observed how these themes of flouted conventions, ignorance, and unusual attention to women work together to offer Roman comedy's most disturbing and subversive response to questions surrounding gender. Sharon James (1998, 41–7) and J. L. Penwill (2004) have both noted how Terence, by emphasizing the unusual nastiness of the rape of Philumena and Pamphilus's other unsavory character traits, offers an especially troubling and female-centered look into the comic lover/rapist. Walter Forehand remarks on how much of the play's plot depends on the unfair stereotyping of its women characters.⁸ Niall Slater (1988) discusses how *Hecyra* exposes the “fictions of patriarchy” by calling attention to the contrast between the truth of the play's events and the assumptions of several of its male characters. Christopher Star (forthcoming) has argued that the play's discourse about women's silence comments metatheatrically on the play's drift from the comic to the tragic.

In turning the conventions of New Comedy upside down, in repeatedly emphasizing ignorance, and in paying unusual attention to his female characters, Terence calls attention to the “other side” of the typical New Comic plot. The play offers unique views into the raped woman, the wives, and the *meretrix*, characters often seen primarily through the eyes of their rapists, husbands, and lovers, and it makes us see in a new way how the actions and false assumptions of the male characters affect the women they interact with. In the process Terence shows how the male-centered plots of most New Comedies misrepresent the situation of women. A look at the metrical patterns of *Hecyra*, which determined much of its music, reveals that music made a significant contribution to what the play has to say about gender.⁹

The mother-in-law of *Hecyra*'s title is Sostrata, mother of Pamphilus, who is away on business when the play begins. In the opening scenes between Pamphilus's slave Parmeno, the *meretrix* Philotis, and the *anus* Syra, we learn that Sostrata's daughter-in-law, Philumena, has been living with her while Pamphilus is away, but she has left her and returned home without giving a reason. Parmeno assumes that Sostrata and Philumena have feuded. Sostrata's husband, Laches, makes the same assumption, and in the next scene he chastises Sostrata severely, though she claims she is innocent. Pamphilus then returns from his trip, and he discovers that in fact Philumena left Sostrata so that her mother-in-law would not know that she

is pregnant; she is now giving birth. Pamphilus knows he cannot be the father of Philumena's child, because it has been only a few months since he, after pining for the prostitute Bacchis, consummated his marriage. Pamphilus has since grown to love Philumena, but he is unwilling to stay with the mother of someone else's child, so he tells Laches that he will leave Philumena because of her quarrel with his mother. He loses this excuse when Sostrata agrees to leave the city so that she will not be in the way of Philumena's return.

Meanwhile, Philumena's father, Phidippus, learns of the birth. He assumes that Philumena's mother, Myrrina, has kept the birth a secret in anger at Pamphilus, because she thinks Pamphilus is still in love with Bacchis. Told of this, Laches calls upon Bacchis to reassure Myrrina and Philumena that she is no longer intimate with Pamphilus. When she does so, Bacchis discovers that a ring Pamphilus gave her in fact belongs to Philumena. Shortly before the marriage, Pamphilus had raped Philumena and taken the ring. It was dark, and neither assailant nor victim knew the other's identity. Pamphilus and Philumena can be reunited, since the baby is his. Laches and Phidippus, left in the dark about what actually happened (since Pamphilus and the women agree to keep the truth hidden, contrary to comic convention), never learn that Sostrata and Myrrina are innocent of wrongdoing.

The following chart shows the meters Terence used in presenting this plot.

Hecyra's meters

Unaccompanied (ia6)	Stichic accompanied (<u>tr7</u> : underlined; ia8: italics; ia7: bold)	Polymetric
1–197: Prologue; Philotis and Syra; Parmeno, Philotis, and Syra	<u>217–42: Laches and Sostrata</u> 243–73: Phidippus, Laches, and Sostrata <u>274–80: Sostrata monody</u> <i>293–312: Pamphilus and Parmeno</i>	198–216 (ia8 with ia6 interruptions): Laches and Sostrata 281–92 (tr8, tr7): Pamphilus and Parmeno

(Continued on next page)

Unaccompanied	Stichic accompanied	Polymetric
	313: Parmeno on women <i>314–24: Pamphilus and Parmeno</i> 325–26: Pamphilus enters house	
327–35: Parmeno monologue	336–60: Sostrata and Parmeno; Pamphilus, Sostrata, and Parmeno <i>361–408: Pamphilus monody</i>	
409–50: Pamphilus, Parmeno and Sosia	<i>451–84: Laches, Phidippus, and Pamphilus</i>	
485–515: Pamphilus, Phidippus, and Laches		516–46 (tr8, tr7, tr4^, ia8): Myrrina and Phidippus
	<i>547–65: Myrrina and Phidippus</i> <i>566–606: Myrrina monody; Sostrata and Pamphilus</i>	
623–726: Phidippus, Laches, and Pamphilus		607–22 (ia7, ia8, tr7, ia6, tr8, ia4): Laches, Sostrata, and Pamphilus
	732–42: Bacchis and Laches	727–31 (ia8, ia4^): Bacchis and Laches
	<i>755–67: Laches and Bacchis; Phidippus enters</i>	743–54 (tr7, ia8, tr8): Bacchis and Laches
	769–97: Phidippus, Laches, and Bacchis	768 (tr8): Phidippus to nurse
	<i>799–815: Parmeno and Bacchis</i> 816–40: Bacchis's monody	798 (tr8): Laches's last words
854–58: Pamphilus and Bacchis greet	<i>859–68: Pamphilus and Bacchis</i> <i>869–80: Bacchis, Pamphilus, and Parmeno</i>	841–53 (tr8, tr7, tr4^, ia8): Pamphilus and Parmeno

The most conspicuous way that the Roman comic playwrights manipulated music was through the alternation of passages in iambic senarii, which were spoken without accompaniment, and passages in other meters, which were sung to the accompaniment of the *tibia*. Viewed in terms of gender, this alternation in *Hecyra* reveals a number of interesting patterns. It is striking how musical *Hecyra* is, and how much of that music involves the women characters. The average Terentian comedy is about 52 percent sung. *Hecyra* is over 61 percent sung, far more than any other play of Terence (the next most musical Terentian play, *Andria*, is just over 53 percent sung). All the female characters except the protatic characters Philotis and Syra sing everything they say except a few verses, whereas all the male characters spend a good deal of their time on stage speaking. Each of the three female characters besides the protatic characters starts music at her first entrance.¹⁰ Only once in the play does music start after a significant pause without a female character being present on stage (451).¹¹

The first three units of iambic senarii longer than one or two verses all center around Parmeno (58–197, 327–35, 409–50). Parmeno is the main source of the false perspective the audience gets on Sostrata and Philumena; the slave's separation from music underlines the degree to which he and his perspective are alienated from what is really going on. The next two units of iambic senarii are in scenes dominated by Phidippus and Laches (485–515, 623–726). The two *senes* likewise make false assumptions and are kept separate from the women's musical world. Following a pattern typical of Roman comedy (Moore 2012, 263–64), Terence brings a reversal of previous patterns near the end of the play. He calls extra attention to Bacchis, who brings about the play's resolution, by starting a final, very short, spoken section when Pamphilus sees her for the first time (854) and starting the music again as Pamphilus praises her (859).

Another result of the sung/unsung alternation in *Hecyra* is that, in contrast to usual patterns, in which exposition is presented without the potential distraction of song and instrumental accompaniment, a remarkable amount of information essential to understanding *Hecyra*'s plot is sung to accompaniment. Parmeno provides much of the background to the play in the opening unaccompanied scenes, but, as we have noted, much of his information is wrong. The true situation is revealed primarily in four monodies: Sostrata sings that she has not in fact been fighting with Philumena (274–80), Pamphilus sings his report of Philumena's pregnancy (361–408), Myrrina reports the rape of Philumena in a song (566–76), and Bacchis sings as she reveals that Pamphilus was the rapist (816–40).¹² This inversion of the normal patterns of exposition has several effects. First, music reinforces the emotions of each of the singers: the anguish of Sostrata, Pamphilus,

and Myrrina; and Bacchis's joy. Second, by making so much of his exposition musical, Terence emphasizes still more the contrast between the false perceptions of Parmeno, Laches, and Phidippus and the true situation, known primarily to the women. Third, because music makes audibility more challenging, the use of accompanied monodies to provide essential information reinforces the play's strong feeling of secrecy and confusion, the principal product of which is the misjudgment of the play's women by the male characters.

Similar associations between musical patterns and gender appear when we examine the individual sung meters of this play. All the major accompanied meters—trochaic septenarius, iambic septenarius, and iambic octonarius—occur in significant patterns.

The most common accompanied meter in *Hecyra*, as in Roman comedy in general, is the trochaic septenarius.¹³ Patterns of trochaic septenarii help call attention to the degree to which the male characters, especially Laches, fail to understand what is going on, in spite of their pretensions to knowledge, largely because of false assumptions about women. Laches sings *Hecyra*'s first trochaic septenarii as he assures Sostrata that he knows what is happening at his home in town even though he spends most of his time in the country.¹⁴ He begins (217):

multo melius hic quae fiunt quam illi[c] ubi sum adsidue scio.

I know much better the things that happen here than there, where I am all the time.

He continues in trochaic septenarii, chastising his wife, until Phidippus enters twenty-six lines later (243).

The next two long units of trochaic septenarii reveal that Laches's alleged knowledge about his wife is false. First, after Phidippus and Laches have left the stage, the meter changes to trochaic septenarius as Sostrata reveals in a monody that she is innocent, and Laches's "knowledge" is based on a faulty stereotype (274–79):

edepol ne nos sumus inique aequae omnes invisae viris
propter paucas, quae omnes faciunt dignae ut videamur malo.
nam ita me di ament, quod me accusat nunc vir, sum extra noxiam.
sed non facile est expurgatu: ita animum induxerunt socrus
omnis esse iniquas: haud pol mequidem; nam numquam secus
habui illam ac si ex me esset gnata.

By Pollux, all of us equally are really hateful to our husbands, unjustly, because of a few, who bring it about that we all seem deserving of punishment. The gods help me, I am innocent of what my husband accuses me of. But it is not easy to clear myself. They've made up their minds that all mothers-in-law are unreasonable. But by god I'm not: I never treated her otherwise than I would have if she had been my own daughter.

The next long trochaic section is another monody, in which Pamphilus reveals the real reason for Philumena's departure: she is giving birth (361–408). The first three trochaic septenarii units thus move the audience from ignorance through incomplete knowledge to more complete knowledge. As they do, the musical echo reminds us of Laches's initial false assumption.

In the next trochaic septenarius passage, Laches continues to act on his false "knowledge." The trochaic septenarii begin as Laches and Phidippus enter (451). Believing that Philumena left because of Sostrata, the two *senes* assume that she can return now that Pamphilus is back. The trochaic septenarii—and indeed the music altogether—stop as Pamphilus refuses to take Philumena back (485). In the next long passage of trochaic septenarii, Phidippus, like Laches, has made a false assumption about his wife. Phidippus believes that Myrrina has been concealing the birth of Philumena's child out of hostility to Pamphilus. Laches had moved from polymetry to trochaic septenarii as he asserted his false knowledge about Sostrata (217). This time Myrrina starts the trochaic septenarii as she appears to confirm Phidippus's false belief in order to protect Philumena (547).

Laches makes the same assumption about Myrrina, and, acting on that, he begins the next extended set of trochaic septenarii as he asks Bacchis to go in and tell Myrrina that she has not been sleeping with Pamphilus (755). When Phidippus enters, he continues Laches's final trochaic septenarius before changing the meter, underlining the commonality of the *senes'* beliefs and actions (767).

The next trochaic septenarius passage reinforces the theme of Parmeno's lack of knowledge. It begins as Parmeno returns from the "wild goose chase" that Pamphilus sent him on to get rid of him (799). Parmeno's entrance is a "reverse *currens* scene" (Goldberg 1986, 158). He has not learned any news, but he nevertheless enters exhausted. The trochaic septenarii, the meter most often used of *servi currentes*, increase the irony.

Like almost all Roman comedies, *Hecyra* ends in trochaic septenarii, and the last trochaic septenarius passage brings back the association with the *senes* and their ignorance. Just before the final switch to trochaic septenarii, Pamphilus asks Bacchis to keep her knowledge a secret (865–71):

PAM. dic mi, harunc rerum numquid dixi iam patri? BA. nil.
PAM. neque opus est ia8
adeo muttito, placet non fieri hoc itidem ut in comoediis
omnia omnes ubi resciscunt. hic quos par fuerat resciscere
sciunt; quos non autem aequomst scire neque resciscent
neque scient.
BA. immo etiam qui hoc occultari facilius credas dabo. tr7
Myrrina ita Phidippo dixit iureiurando meo
se fidem habuisse et propterea te sibi purgatum. PAM. optumest:

PAM: Tell me, you haven't told my father anything about this, have you?
BA: Nothing.

PAM. There's no need to say a word. I don't want this to happen the way it does in comedies, where everybody finds out everything. Here those who should have found things out know, but those who shouldn't know won't find out or know.

BA. All right, and I'll make you even surer that this will remain hidden: Myrrina told Phidippus that she believed my oath and that because of that you are cleared with her.

PAM. Terrific!

The meter changes to trochaic septenarii as Bacchis assures Pamphilus that his secret is safe (869). The last trochaic septenarii echo the first, where Laches confidently professes his knowledge (217): not only have the *senes* been mistaken in their alleged knowledge throughout the play, but they will remain ignorant forever.

Hecyra has 126 iambic septenarii, more than any other play of Terence. Throughout Roman comedy, there is a close connection between iambic septenarii and love, women who are loved, and the resolution of love plots (Moore 2012, 185–88). In *Hecyra* iambic septenarii are closely associated with Philumena, underlining the significance and even the power of the woman who seems at first sight both powerless and surprisingly insignificant.¹⁵ Although her very name suggests passivity and she never appears on stage, Philumena sets the play's plot in motion with her departure from Sostrata's house, and the actions of all the characters are attempts to address the crisis that departure causes. Repeated iambic septenarii underline her influence, reinforcing the play's unusually thorough—and disturbing—perspective on the raped woman.

Phidippus introduces the first iambic septenarii as he enters from his house, talking back to his daughter. He begins (243–45):

etsi scio ego, Philumena, meum ius esse ut te cogam
 quae ego imperem facere, ego tamen patrio animo victu' faciam
 ut tibi concedam neque tuae lubidini advorsabor.

Philumena, although I know that I have the right to force you to do what
 I command, still I'm overcome by my paternal feeling, so I yield to you
 and I won't oppose your whim.

The iambic septenarii continue throughout the scene, as Phidippus defends to Laches his decision to abide by Philumena's wish to remain in her own house (246–73).

Parmeno sings one iambic septenarius as he concludes his argument about the ease with which the alleged quarrel between Philumena and Sostrata can be solved (313):

fortasse unum aliquod verbum inter eas iram hanc concivisse.¹⁶

Perhaps just some single word stirred up this anger between them.

The switch from iambic octonarii to iambic septenarii serves primarily to bring closure to Parmeno's argument,¹⁷ but the metrical echo of Phidippus's iambic septenarii also calls attention to the contrast between Phidippus's concern for Philumena and the slave's dismissal of her feelings along with those of her mother-in-law.

The next iambic septenarii are Pamphilus's final verses before he enters Phidippus's house after he has heard noises within (325–26):

quonam modo, Philumena mea, nunc te offendam adfectam?
 nam si periculum ullum in te inest, perisse me una haud dubiumst.

Dear Philumena, what condition am I going to find you in? I tell you, if
 you are in any danger, there's no doubt that I am done for.

In the opening verses of both Phidippus's and Pamphilus's iambic septenarii passages, the vocative *Philumena* occurs immediately before the diaeresis, with its final "a" lengthened by position, followed by a form of *meus* and then six long syllables. The two passages are connected visually as well, for they both involve movement into or out of Phidippus's house. Father and husband are joined in their well-meaning but misinformed concern for Philumena.

Sostrata brings the next iambic septenarii. Like Pamphilus, she is responding with concern to the sounds coming from Philumena's house. She begins (336–37):

nescioquid iamdudum audio hic tumultuari misera:
male metuo ne Philumenaē mage morbus adgravescat:

Oh dear! Just now I heard some kind of noisy confusion here. I'm really afraid that Philumena's illness may have gotten worse.

Like Phidippus and Pamphilus before her, Sostrata uses the name *Philumena* just before the diaeresis, though this time it is genitive rather than vocative, and in her second verse rather than her first. The iambic septenarii continue as Sostrata worries about Philumena in dialogues with Parmeno and Pamphilus (338–60).

Two individual iambic septenarii frame a later scene in which Laches thinks the "Philumena problem" has been solved. After he overhears, from offstage, Sostrata telling Pamphilus that she will leave her home so that Philumena can return, Laches enters and praises her decision, beginning with one iambic septenarius (607). He uses another iambic septenarius when he sees Phidippus entering at the end of the scene (622).

The "Philumena problem" is not solved, of course, but it only becomes more complicated in the ensuing scenes. Laches, as we have seen, tries to solve the problem by summoning Bacchis. Laches and Bacchis converse in iambic septenarii (732–42). This is in keeping with the frequent association between iambic septenarii and prostitutes in Roman comedy. At the same time, the use of iambic septenarii foreshadows Bacchis's role as the woman who will solve Philumena's problem. Bacchis then convinces Laches that she is no longer sleeping with Pamphilus. Iambic septenarii return as she must likewise convince Phidippus, and they continue as she is persuaded to go into Phidippus's house to tell Myrrina and Philumena (769–97). Just before she enters the house she hesitates and sings (793):

perii, pudet Philumenaē. me sequimini huc intro ambae.

Oh no, I'm ashamed to face Philumena. (*addressing her handmaids*) You two follow me inside here.

Again, the name *Philumena* occurs just before the diaeresis of an iambic septenarius, right before a character exits into Phidippus's house. *Me* replaces *meus*, but the echo is clear: Bacchis, like Phidippus, Pamphilus, and Sostrata, is responding to events set in motion by Philumena. This scene of iambic septenarii is framed by

single trochaic octonarii, sung first by Phidippus (768) and then by Laches (798). The musical frame subtly separates the two *senes* from the resolution the *meretrix* will bring about.

When Bacchis returns, she brings the play's final iambic septenarii as she reports the recognition that occurred indoors, which will allow the resolution of the dilemma originally begun with Philumena's departure from her mother-in-law's house (816–40).

Although it is the second most common accompanied meter in Terence's corpus, the iambic octonarius takes third place in *Hecyra*, with 113 verses, and it does not carry the same thematic weight as the iambic senarii, trochaic septenarii, or iambic septenarii. Its several units do not appear to offer noteworthy echoes or parallelism. One of those units, however, is significant for what it joins together. When Phidippus leaves the stage after forbidding Myrrina to expose Philumena's child, the meter switches to iambic octonarii, and Myrrina reveals in a monody that Philumena was raped before her marriage (566–76). Sostrata and Pamphilus then enter, and we learn that Sostrata is planning to leave the city so that Philumena can return (577–606). Although we might expect a meter change at such a significant change of characters and subject, the iambic octonarii remain, calling attention to the juxtaposition of the real and the pretended reasons for Philumena's absence.

The play's several polymetric passages likewise reinforce messages about gender. A polymetric dialogue between Laches and Sostrata is the first music of the play (198–216). They sing iambic octonarii interrupted by iambic senarii. Each interruption has significance for the themes of the play surrounding false judgment of women.

After railing against women for three verses, Laches stops the music briefly for a maxim (201):

itaque adeo uno animo omnes socrus oderunt nurus. ia6

That's the way it is: all mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law hate each other.

He then continues his tirade in iambic octonarii. The stop in the music brings special attention to the falsely applied stereotype that will drive much of the play's plot.¹⁸ Countering that assumption is the next break in the music, as Sostrata offers her first response to the accusations (205–7):

SO. me miseram, quae nunc quam ob rem accuser nescio.

LA. hem

ia6

tu nescis? **SO.** non, ita me di ament, mi Lache,
itaque una inter nos agere aetatem liceat. **LA.** di mala prohibeant. ia8

SO: Oh dear! I don't know why I am being accused.

LA: What? You don't know?

SO: No, dear Laches, by the gods, and by my wish that we be permitted
to spend the rest of our lives together.

LA: The gods forbid!

These first two very brief pauses in the music underline the central opposition of the play, between the alleged knowledge of the male characters, based on generalizations about women, and the actual knowledge of the female characters.

The iambic octonarii continue until Laches ends the polymetric section with another iambic senarius (215–16):

an, quia ruri esse crebro soleo, nescire arbitramini ia8
quo quisque pacto hic vitam vostrarum exigit? ia6

Or do you think, because I usually spend most of my time in the country,
that I don't know how all of you here are conducting your lives?

A switch to iambic senarius, perhaps with a stop in the music, joins the switch to trochaic septenarii in the next verse (see above) to underline Laches's key point: that he knows what has been going on in his house even though he has been in the country. Of course, he doesn't, as the rest of the play will demonstrate.

The next polymetric section is more typical (281–92). This is one of only two polymetric passages in the play that do not include one of the women characters. It nevertheless has bearing on the play's messages about gender, as Pamphilus, in dialogue with Parmeno, shows a stunning degree of narcissism, making clear that his real concerns are not for his wife or his mother, but for himself.¹⁹ Musical patterns reinforce this impression at the beginning and the end of the polymetric section. The song begins (281–82):

nemini plura acerba credo esse ex amore homini umquam oblata tr8
quam mi. heu me infelicem, hancin ego vitam parsi perdere! tr7

I think nobody has ever gotten more bitterness from love than I have. I'm
so unlucky! Why haven't I just killed myself!

Calling special attention to Pamphilus's self-centeredness is the enjambment

before the phrase *quam mi*, which includes the first of three first-person pronouns in the second verse.

In one of Terence's favorite modes of polymetry (Moore 2012, 211–14), Pamphilus and then Parmeno sing trochaic octonarii and trochaic septenarii, in alternating groups ranging from one to four verses. Such patterns almost inevitably lead to iambic octonarii. Here Terence keeps his audience waiting for twelve verses before the expected iambic octonarii arrive. In only three other passages, two of them in this play (see below), do Terence's characters sing a pattern of this type without reaching an iambic octonarius or iambic quaternarius within eight verses. At the key moment when the iambic octonarii finally come and the polymetry ends, Pamphilus provides another reminder of his self-absorption (293):

quid consolare me? an quisquam usquam gentiumst aequè miser? ia8

Why are you consoling me? Is there anyone anywhere on earth as wretched as I am?

The next polymetric *canticum* echoes the first, as a husband—this time Phidippus—wrongly accuses his wife. Myrrina begins the song, which is another variation on the trochaic octonarii-trochaic septenarii-iambic octonarii pattern. Like Pamphilus in the previous polymetric passage, Myrrina enters with a trochaic octonarius followed by two trochaic septenarii, but her mode is perplexity rather than self-pity. Musical effects underline her consternation (516–21):

perii, quid agam? quo me vortam? quid viro meo respondebo tr8
 misera? nam audivisse vocem pueri visust vagientis; tr7
 ita corripuit derepente tacitu' sese ad filiam.
 quod si rescierit peperisse eam, id qua causa clam me habuisse tr8
 dicam non edepol scio. tr4^
 sed ostium concrepuit. credo ipsum exire ad me: nulla sum. ia8

Oh no, what should I do? Where should I turn? What should I say to answer my husband, poor me! He must have heard the baby crying; he ran in to our daughter so fast and silently. If he has found out that she has given birth, I have no idea what excuse I will give for not telling him about it. But the door has creaked. I think he's coming out to find me. I'm done for.

Enjambment before *misera* after the first verse and the repeated correspondence of ictus and accent for *quid*, *quo*, and *quid* underscore her distress. Later she replaces

the trochaic septenarius that would normally follow a trochaic octonarius with a trochaic quaternarius catalectic: the musical truncation reflects her state of terrified uncertainty. The expected iambic octonarius comes when she hears Phidippus open the door.

Phidippus enters with a trochaic septenarius (522) and then echoes his wife by switching to an iambic octonarius as he sees her (523); then he renews the trochaic octonarii-trochaic septenarii-iambic octonarii pattern (524). This time Phidippus and Myrrina sing twenty verses before the expected iambic octonarii come (544). The unique delay reinforces the intensity of the exchange, as Phidippus begins to suspect Myrrina of wanting to expose the baby in order to weaken Pamphilus and Philumena's marriage. Phidippus's actual accusation comes at a key musical moment: the long-delayed switch to iambic octonarii, which end the polymetric section (544–46).

I noted above Laches's use of an iambic septenarius when he has overheard Sostrata say she will leave the city and therefore thinks the play's problem has been solved (607). That verse begins the next polymetric section. After an iambic octonarius (608), Laches and Sostrata continue in trochaic septenarii (609–11). Throughout Roman comedy, trochaic septenarii often signal that the plot is moving toward its resolution (Moore 2012, 247–51). Here Laches and Sostrata are confident that now the plot can move forward as they desire. When Pamphilus begins to respond, though, a single iambic senarius interrupts the trochaic septenarii (612): things will not progress as father and mother wish. Father and son argue in trochaic octonarii and septenarii until Laches tries to close off argument with a pithy iambic quaternarius (621).²⁰ Then, seeing Phidippus, Laches frames the scene and ends the *canticum* with another iambic septenarius (622).

Bacchis's interview with Laches brings the next polymetry. The two begin with parallel pairs of iambic octonarii, each sung aside (727–30): the elegant parallelism makes an appropriate beginning to the sensitive negotiations that will follow.²¹ After Laches approaches and greets Bacchis with a short verse (731, ia4^Λ),²² the two sing the iambic septenarii mentioned above (732–42). After their initial discussion, with its tense ironies and veiled threats, Laches wants to get down to business, and the meter changes to trochaic septenarius as he makes his explicit accusation against Bacchis (743–47):²³

BA. sed quid istuc est? LA. meum receptas filium ad	
te Pamphilum. BA. ah.	tr7
LA. sine dicam: uxorem hanc priu' quam duxit, vestrum amorem	
pertuli.	ia8
mane: nondum etiam dixi id quod volui. hic nunc uxorem habet:	tr7

quaere alium tibi firmiorem [amicum] dum tibi tempu'
 consulendi est; tr8
 nam neque ille hoc animo erit aetatem neque pol tu eadem
 istac aetate.

BA: What is this all about?

LA: You are continuing to receive my son Pamphilus at your house.

BA: Ah!

LA: Let me speak. Before he took this wife, I put up with your love affair.
 Wait. I have not yet said what I want. Now he has a wife: find someone
 else whom you can be more sure of while you have the chance to look
 out for yourself. He won't always have the same attitude to you, nor
 will you always be the age you are now.

Bacchis's exclamation gives Laches pause, and he switches to an iambic octonarius as he insists that she hear him out. Laches's *mane* suggests that Bacchis tries either to leave or to interrupt him. He presses on with another trochaic septenarius; then he raises the emotional intensity with a pair of trochaic octonarii as he demands that she find another lover.

Explaining to Bacchis what he thinks Myrrina believes, Laches brings back the trochaic septenarii (748–49). Bacchis responds (750–52):

aliud si scirem qui firmare meam apud vos possem fidem ia8
 sanctius quam iusiurandum, id pollicerer tibi, Lache, tr7
 me segregatum habuisse, uxorem ut duxit, a me Pamphilum. ia8

If I knew a way I could make sure you believed me even more hallowed
 than an oath, I would use it to promise you, Laches, that I have kept
 Pamphilus away from me since he took a wife.

Oaths elsewhere in Roman comedy are in iambic senarii (Moore 2012, 77n28), and an oath in *Rudens* stops the music (1338). The continuing music here underlines that Bacchis is not really swearing but rather stating in a contrary-to-fact condition that she would do more than swear if she could. And in fact she is not telling the whole truth, for Parmeno has revealed in the play's first scenes that Pamphilus continued meeting Bacchis after his marriage, only stopping his visits to her some months thereafter (157–70): again, Laches will remain in ignorance of the real situation.²⁴ Instead of an iambic senarius, she makes unique midsentence switches from an iambic octonarius to a single trochaic septenarius and back.²⁵

The unusual meter both reflects her anxiety and allows her to bring catalexis (and hence the opportunity for a pause) before the actual statement that she has not been with Pamphilus.

The audience may know that Bacchis is telling a half-truth, but Laches is content with her answer (753–55):

LA. *lepida es. sed scin quid volo potius sodes facias?* BA. *quid vis? cedo.* ia8

LA. *eas ad mulieres huc intro atque istuc iusiurandum idem polliceari illis. exple animum is teque hoc crimine expedi.* tr7

LA. That is very good of you. But do you know what I would rather have you do if you are willing?

BA. What? Tell me.

LA. Go to the women inside here and give them that same oath. Relieve their minds and remove this charge from yourself.

He continues Bacchis's iambic octonarii, but as he makes his request, he echoes her in switching to trochaic septenarii midsentence. Now the negotiations are over, and things can get moving; the polymetric section comes to a close.

The final polymetric section of the play, and only the second that does not include one of the female characters, comes at the final entrance of Pamphilus and Parmeno, after Parmeno has told Pamphilus the good news he received from Bacchis. As in their first polymetric passage, slave and master sing a variation of the trochaic octonarii-trochaic septenarii-iambic octonarii pattern (841–53). Both songs between Pamphilus and Parmeno include twelve verses of trochaics before reaching an iambic octonarius, the longest such series of trochaics in Terence outside of that sung by Myrrina and Phidippus at 524–43.²⁶ The musical echo underlines that the dilemma facing Pamphilus as the play began has been resolved, though through no doing of his own. In the midst of the trochaics, one of Terence's rare short verses brings extra emphasis to Parmeno's ignorance, in contrast to Pamphilus's real savior, Bacchis, who is on stage as the two men sing (849–51):

PAM. *egon pro hoc te nuntio qui donem? qui? qui? nescio.* tr7

PAR. *at ego scio.* PAM. *quid?* PAR. *nihilo enim;* tr4^
nam neque in nuntio neque in me ipso tibi boni quid sit scio. tr7

PAM. What should I give you to reward this message? What? What? I don't know.

PAR. Well I know.

PAM. What?

PAR. Nothing! 'Cause I don't know what good you've gotten from this message or from me myself.²⁷

Terence's most unusual play thus also features some of his most unusual music. In *Hecyra*, which has a higher percentage of musical passages than any other Terentian play, musical patterns repeatedly defy expectations and draw extra attention to the women characters and their knowledge and to the male characters' ignorance. Both the play and its pervasive music challenge assumptions about what men, including those in comic audiences, really know about women.

NOTES

1. See Moore 2012, 88–90, 246, 385; and cf. Hall 1999, 112, on women and music in Greek tragedy.

2. *Casina*: Moore forthcoming; *Truculentus*: Moore 1999, 146–49; *Eunuchus*: Moore 2013, 99; *Asinaria* and *Phormio*: Moore 2012, 265.

3. Norwood 1923, 90. Perelli (1973, 15–16) cites some similarly favorable opinions among Italian scholars. For a very different positive view of the play, see Knorr (2013, 295): “*Hecyra* . . . is a fast-paced farce full of comic plot twists and suspense, eye-catching spectacle, and dramatic irony.” Lefèvre (1999, 28–34) and Knorr (2013, 295–97) provide reviews of scholarship.

4. Already Donatus observed that *Hecyra* brought *res novae* (*Hec. praef.* 1.9). Konstan suggests that the play “challenges and confounds” the customary meanings of comedy’s conventions (1983, 141). Both Duckworth (1952, 149) and Goldberg (1986, 166–69) attribute to Terence’s flouting of comic convention *Hecyra*’s failure at its first two performances. Whether this hypothesis is plausible depends on just when in the play those performances were interrupted. The prologues appear to suggest that the performances did not progress far enough for audiences to have judged them before the actors were compelled to stop. Cf. Lefèvre 1999, 175–79. The many questions surrounding *Hecyra*’s unsuccessful performances are beyond the scope of this chapter. For these, see Lada-Richards 2004 and Goldberg 2013, 15–18, both with reviews of earlier scholarship.

5. See especially Schadeewaldt 1931, 20–28; and Lefèvre 1999, 35–36 and *passim*. Sewart (1974) disagrees with the belief of most critics that Terence moved material from Apollodorus’s prologue to dialogue and monologues later in the play, but he agrees that Terence has removed a divine prologue and, with it, important information for understanding the plot. Review of the question appears in Ireland 1990, 9–13.

6. McGarrity (1980–81) argues that the play’s central theme is reputation versus reality, Compagno (1987) that the audience’s lack of knowledge contributes to the play’s humor.

Kruschwitz (1999) notes that the keeping of secrets serves as a leitmotif throughout the play. Anderson (2002, 6–7) suggests that limitations on recognition contribute to the negative portrayal of Pamphilus.

7. Norwood, for example, called *Hecyra* “a woman’s play” (1923, 91).

8. Forehand 1985, 102–4; cf. Perelli 1973, 22–23.

9. On the close connection between meter and music in Roman comedy, see Moore 2008; 2012, 15–17, 144–236.

10. Knorr’s argument (2013, 300) that the entrance of Philotis and Syra, before a scene in iambic senarii, would be danced to musical accompaniment, is unpersuasive. Cf. Moore 2012, 19–22.

11. If the single iambic senarius at 612 stops the music, music starts again just after Sostrata leaves the stage.

12. On the uniqueness of these monodies, see Denzler 1968, 13–18, 31–33, 69–74, 134–43.

13. There are 221 trochaic septenarii in *Hecyra*’s 880 verses.

14. Kauer and Lindsay (1958) read verse 134 as a trochaic septenarius. Philotis, hearing that Pamphilus was forced to marry, exclaims: *at te di deaeque perduint cum istoc odio, Lache!* If Kauer and Lindsay are right, the association between Laches and trochaic septenarii starts with an unparalleled one-verse interruption of the play’s opening iambic senarii (if we can believe the readings of the manuscripts, Plautus twice makes similar interruptions, but later in his plays: *Aul.* 393, *Poen.* 1165). Kauer and Lindsay’s reading here, however, is doubtful. Cf. Bruder 1970, 2n1. My thanks to Victor Benjamin (Université de Montréal) for advice on the reading of this verse.

15. The following is an expansion of Moore 2007, 105–7.

16. The text is uncertain here. The manuscripts end this verse with *conciverit* or *concluserit*, which do not scan, or *concluisset*, which makes no sense (Victor Benjamin, personal correspondence); but Donatus (ad loc.) reports the reading *concivisse*. Bentley added *ere*, Dziatzko *ita*, after *concivisse* to produce an iambic octonarius. Kauer and Lindsay (1958) print this verse as an iambic septenarius but record it as an iambic octonarius in their *schema metrorum*, perhaps reflecting doubts about the text.

17. On the iambic septenarius as a meter of closure, see Moore 2012, 188; cf. Bruder 1970, 69.

18. Cf. Bruder 1970, 66.

19. Cf. Penwill 2004, 133–34.

20. Because there is enjambment after the trochaic septenarius of 620, 621 is probably better read as the end of a trochaic system; cf. Maurach 1961, 376. Either way it provides musical closure, reflecting Laches’s desire to have the last word in the argument.

21. This kind of AA BB pattern is rare in Terence (Braun 1970, 73–4). Goldberg (2013, 25) observes that here “each figure assumes a posture for the audience’s benefit before turning to the other.”

22. On the function of this verse, which both brings closure to the iambic octonarii and leads into the catalectic iambic septenarii, see Maurach 1961, 374–75.

23. Cf. Bruder 1970, 33.

24. In spite of Parmeno's general unreliability, there is no reason to doubt him on this. His false information about the motivation for Philumena's departure was based on assumptions, his report on Pamphilus's activities on observation. Sewart (1974, 254–55) suggests that Pamphilus continued to visit Bacchis, but she refused to sleep with him after his marriage. Cf. Goldberg 2013, 183–84.

25. In only five other passages in Roman comedy does a single trochaic septenarius occur between two iambic octonarii without a speaker change (*Capt.* 772, 775; *Men.* 130; *Merc.* 117; *Stich.* 306). In all of these a full stop or a near full stop occurs both before and after the trochaic septenarius.

26. The series beginning at 281 is slightly longer than that beginning at 841, because the latter has more shorter verses.

27. Cf. Maurach 1961, 375.

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Part Two

Women in Roman Drama and Society



Women in Control

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When, and how, do women find themselves in control? Students of Roman law might associate the category of controlling women with wealthy Roman *dotatae*.¹ But our examples of such wealthy wives in New and Roman comedy should act as a caution against any simple presumption. In Plautus's *Menaechmi* and *Asinaria*, Caecilius's *Plocium* (=Menander's *Plokion*), and Terence's *Phormio* (=Apollodorus's *Epidikazomenos*), the wealthy wives are introduced in hostile terms by their parasitic and unfaithful husbands, who are useless as husbands or fathers and more obsessed with lechery than with their civic or economic functions. Their perspective is hardly to be taken at face value but has rarely been questioned. In this essay I examine the types and sources of power exercised by women in Roman comedy, drawing on comparative evidence from Greek literature and social history, to assess the ways in which women exercise control.

Heiresses and Dowered Wives

In Plautus's *Menaechmi*, Epidamnian Menaechmus abuses his wife for monitoring his behavior—but he has brought her observation on his own head: he is completely unscrupulous, not only sneaking off to spend a *cinq à sept* with his mistress next door but also stealing from his wife's wardrobe. Even the wife's father, unsympathetic when she first wants a divorce, becomes indignant over the theft of her personal property. We are told that the *uxor dotata* of *Asinaria* controls the purse strings (line 87), and she is accordingly introduced by her husband as the object of his loathing, but her financial control is kept offstage and she does not even enter the action until she hauls him off home in the final scene.² Caecilius's *Plocium* also introduces the wealthy wife through the hostile account of her husband, who

treats her as repellent and shrewish: she has forced him to sell the pretty young slave girl who took his fancy and is boasting about it among her friends.³

In Terence's *Phormio*, Nausistrata (whom her husband, Chremes, calls *uxorem saevam*, 744) proves justified by circumstance and reasonable in her reproaches. Her chief reaction to his infidelity is grief and self-pity (*misera*, 1006, 1019), and she frequently uses the words *indignum* (1009, 1040), and *merito* (1031, 1033, 1051). Far from openly abusing him, she simply grieves over her bleak future in such a marriage. Throughout the revelation scene, she speaks with sorrow and dignity (990–1045).⁴ At the end she resigns control to her son, who will in future supervise his father's behavior. Although she has apparently played no role in her son's life during his father's absences and seems to have exercised no control in the home, the older men rely on her when they are conspiring to placate the girl Phanium, whom they believe they must persuade to assent to be divorced from Antipho (784–95). They need Nausistrata's help with this plan, so we may infer some perception of her domestic influence. In handing her miscreant husband over to their son for punishment, she specifies to him that she has not forgiven him (1044), and she readily takes up Phormio's request for a dinner invitation, as a means to discomfit Demipho (1052–53). If these moments do not present her as exercising control over men, they show her as exercising her own judgment even against the preferences of her menfolk.

In all these cases, what puts wives in control of the action is their husbands' guilt, as in *Casina*, where Lysidamus is conspiring to enjoy the pretty foster daughter destined by his wife for marriage to the personal slave of their son (cf. the lechery of Demipho in *Mercator*). *Casina* is the extreme case, which I have reserved for last position in our narrative. But it is worthwhile asking a slightly different question: what evidence is there in Roman comedy for women showing solidarity or collaborating? We have good evidence from contemporary social history of women's organizations for religious purposes, and even—as in the case of repealing the Lex Oppia (195 BCE, when Plautus was in full spate) cooperating on behalf of their gender and the privileges of women.⁵ So when is women's solidarity portrayed in comedy? In comedies with significant female roles we find sisters (*Poenulus*) and fellow slaves (*Rudens*) caring for one another (see also Feltovich in this volume), but it is less common to find older or married women collaborating. I know of only two instances: *Cistellaria* and *Casina*. The first opens with a “breakfast” of *meretrices/betairai*: there the old Lena shows real solidarity with her peers, but it is against the competing solidarity of *matronae*.⁶ This solidarity is possible only when women are single parents, as Dwora Gilula points out: “Such families with a woman at their head are the only families in which the woman has an authority comparable to that of a *paterfamilias*: the important decisions are taken only by

Lena⁷ and Melaenis while Selenium and Gymnasium merely obey.”⁸ These women have not only the opportunity but also the economic necessity of control over their households.

Notably, the solidarity that I have stressed as a virtue of underprivileged (non-citizen) women is true in wider terms among the women we meet in the comedies of both Plautus and Terence: wives do not compete with wives, nor are they shown plotting against noncitizen outsiders. Even in the family conflicts and misunderstandings of Terence’s *Hecyra* it is the menfolk, not their wives, who condemn the (actually innocent) courtesan Bacchis. Among these underprivileged women, solidarity seems closer to the norm than the exception.⁹

Indeed, we see several instances of acts of solidarity in *Cistellaria*. Selenium has been ordered back home by her mother because her lover is being coerced into marrying a cousin, so Gymnasium and her mother take on Selenium’s request to occupy her abandoned lodgings and inform her lover what has happened in his absence, although they will forfeit Gymnasium’s income from casual customers for a couple of days. Selenium, of course, actually owes her survival and identity to the Lena, who had rescued her as a foundling baby and given her to her friend Melaenis, who wanted a child—another act of sisterly kindness (on sisters and sisterhood, see Feltovich in this volume). Finally, there is sisterly help across the social divide from Melaenis, who admits Selenium’s origin to her birth mother, Phanostrata, who is seeking her long-lost daughter.¹⁰

Only two plays represent a pair of *matronae* as neighbors: *Mercator*, in which the husbands conspire to set up a party (the wronged wives are treated in isolation from each other, and Demipho’s wife does not even appear on stage), and *Casina*, the unique surviving example of women conspiring to retaliate on the wandering old husband. I shall return to *Casina* at the end of this discussion. Here I consider why we see so little collaboration between women. First, married women do not provide comedy unless they are exaggerated termagants. But, second, this lack of cooperation may reflect the household relations, not of second-century Rome—where we find women collaborating—but of fourth-century Athens. Women seem to have been more housebound, and so more isolated from one another, in the Athens of the orators and New Comedy.¹¹

Women as Lovers

One category of roles in our comedies does not raise the issue of control: the young lovers. Plautus’s plays begin with a romance already formed and harmony between the lovers; but few of the women are in any case free agents. Most are brothel slaves, indebted to their lovers for the possibility of freedom and with

no independent purposes; Philematium in *Mostellaria*, who shows loyalty and gratitude to the lover who has squandered his money on freeing her, is a rare exception.

The situation in Terence's plays is again one of mutual affection, although it is in several ways more realistic and closer to what we imagine as private life in bourgeois Athens. Young men fresh from their military service as ephebes seem to have no obligations: they hang around together, socializing with hetairai, whether or not they have any personal involvement. Simo in *Andria* describes his son's associates as taking turns to visit the independent hetaira Chrysis, with three sharing her favors, while his own son limits himself to contributing his share of a collective dinner (84–89). In *Eunuchus* the boys troop off to Piraeus for a contributory dinner (539–40); in *Phormio* they gather in a barber's shop to watch and escort from music school the young trainee hetaira whom Phaedria loves (81–90). In two plays the boys attend the funeral of a dead hetaira, and it is as though the hetaira's household was part of the local street life.

The only negative report comes in Plautus's *Truculentus*, when Astaphium, the housekeeper of the hetaira Phronesium, complains of the young men who invade her household, swarming five or six at a time to steal her property (99–104). So she and her mistress are justified in retaliating and robbing these thieves before their very eyes: *nam ipsi vident quom eorum agerimus bona atque ultro ipsi aggerunt ad nos* (107–9: "The men whose goods we take away are witnesses and even voluntarily heap up their gifts to us"). Plautus plays here with words that sound alike but mean opposite things: *agerimus* comes from *a-gerere*, "to take away"; *aggerimus* is from *ad + gerere*, "to bring toward, to pile up."

Usually, though, there are no issues of conflicting wills or mastery between the young couples of comedy, whatever the woman's level of freedom. All this comes later in the hetaira's lifecycle. The women with the opportunity for control are the independent hetairai and single mothers of the demimonde, mostly noncitizens living by the contributions of one or more lovers. Their income is freelance and varies enormously: there is no regular tariff for different forms of intercourse or time spent with the lover. And their finances can be precarious. Hence such women might have to survive by contracting themselves to serve one or more lovers for months or a year, and we have references to such contracts in Pseudo-Demosthenes 59 *Against Neaera*, in Plautus's *Bacchides*, and cited verbatim with restricting clauses in *Asinaria*.

The most interesting hetairai are those who have achieved a level of financial independence, like Thais in *Eunuchus* (Menander's Chrysis) or the less fully developed Cleareta in *Asinaria*, and the two *lenae* of *Cistellaria/Synaristosae*. The most complex of these women, seen from her own self-interested viewpoint, is certainly

Plautus's Phronesium in *Truculentus*.¹² The playwright gives us the material to examine her character and actions: we can balance his presentation of her motivation and methods against the social details of her circumstances that relate her behavior to real life. But while she is our main preoccupation, Diniarchus, her primary lover, needs explaining—and indeed, he is given a prominent opportunity to explain himself. Plautus uses a double prologue: first some twenty rather damaged lines spoken in his own person, introducing the woman who contains in herself all the (bad) qualities of our age (*huius saeculi mores possidet*, 13), then a much fuller, even rambling, prologue by her lover Diniarchus on lovers in general and his own weakness and gullibility in particular. Other material was conventionally included in comic prologues (explanations of identity, identification of occupants of the stage houses, and narrative of previous relationships), so we can be fairly sure that Plautus himself cut these factual and social details from his Greek model. (If he did not, then the first part of his prologue must have come down to us in mutilated form.)

Konstan (1983), in one of the few sophisticated discussions of this play, has remarked on the autonomy of both leading characters, something we might better call their social detachment. Diniarchus is not named in the prologue; he does not identify where he is living on or offstage (and he cannot live on stage, as all three stage houses are needed, for Phronesium, for Strabax's family, and for Callicles). We are not told about his own family—his parents seem to be dead, not surprisingly perhaps if he is old enough (over thirty?) to be sent as a public negotiator to Lemnos. He has just returned (74–75) after an absence that could be as short as two weeks or as long as eight months. The first three acts tell us nothing about his previous life except the extravagant submission to Phronesium, which has led him to transfer all his property into her hands except the *fundi et aedes*, which are presumably the inherited family plot of land up-country and the town house; these would normally be inalienable. Is this where he is living?

We know only that Diniarchus is aware of his own helplessness. Whether Phronesium gratifies him or denies him, he is equally ruined (43–50):

si semel Amoris poculum accepit meri
 eaque intra pectus se penetravit potio,
 extemplo et ipse perit et res et fides.
 si iratum scortum fortis amatori suo,
 bis perit amator, ab re <d> atque animo simul;
 si alter alteri propitiust +idem+ perit,
 si raras noctes ducit, ab animo perit;
 si increbravit ipse gaudet, res perit.

If the lover has once drained the cup of undiluted love, and this draught has entered his breast, he himself is instantly doomed and his property and credit. If the tart happens to be angry with her lover, he is twice doomed, in property and at heart. If she's kind to him, he still is doomed. If he only enjoys infrequent nights, he is doomed in heart. If they become more frequent, then he is happy, but his property is doomed.

But our perception of this lover is radically changed with the entrance of old Callicles in act 4 (775–853). He appears unannounced, dragging along two slaves, his daughter's old nurse and the courtesan's hairdresser. He has interrogated them with torture to find out how his daughter got pregnant and who is father of her baby son. The truth comes when the slave women spot Diniarchus propping up the wall. He is the father of the baby now being passed off by Phronesium as her child by the soldier Stratophanes. Before he went to Lemnos, Diniarchus was engaged to Callicles's daughter and took advantage of her, but then broke off the relationship. This previously unmentioned episode in Diniarchus's life results in his socially imposed marriage and removal from Phronesium's tournament of lovers, though he hopes to be able to keep seeing her even after the wedding.

Now for Phronesium, herself the embodiment of Venus in her domination of the young men of Athens.¹³ Plautus gives her no antecedents; no provenance from one of the islands, no parentage, and no history to explain her relative wealth.¹⁴ She is unique in the comic corpus for her display of wickedness, *malitia*, which is the specialized wickedness of fraud and deceit (471–73).¹⁵

ego quod mala sum, matris opera mala sum et meapte malitia
quae me gravidam esse adsimulabam militi Babylonio:
eam nunc malitiam accuratam miles inveniāt volo.

If I am bad, I am bad thanks to my mother and my own badness,
Pretending that I was pregnant as I did to the Babylonian soldier.
Now I want the soldier to find this bad trick well worked out.

As W. S. Anderson comments, “a woman's badness has special positive value in Plautus' world” (1993, 62). We can endorse his comment on the enormous appeal to the audience of *malitia*, “a quality of all women in Plautus, slave and free” (1993, 77), as well as his further comment: “Badness represents the personal response of every member of the audience, the will to explore, experience, and enjoy what . . . authority figures brand as Bad. . . . The so-called bad man or woman who pursues

and achieves it, even if, briefly, appears . . . a kind of paradigm of our pipedreams” (1993, 90).

Phronesium’s house is the center of the action, and seems to be ample for her business. Like Phronesium herself, it is a space that her lovers repeatedly strive to enter. Besides her bedroom, it must contain a clients’ waiting room, a dining room for the “welcome home” dinner, and a sleeping space for Astaphium, her maid-housekeeper (these all have an equivalent in Thais’s house in *Eunuchus*). Yet scrutiny of the stage directions (which we infer from the characters’ comments) shows that Diniarchus, constantly urged inside by Astaphium (*I intro* 176, 195; cf. 188, 205), stays in the street; Strabax supposedly climbed in over the garden wall; and Stratophanes is prevented from entering the house that is so ready to absorb his money.

Diniarchus outlines Phronesium’s procedure in bargaining for her favors: first there is a fee for the year (10: *merces annua*), not an exclusive contract like the *syngraphe* of *Asinaria*, but a sort of subscription.¹⁶ But the lover is short-changed: *ob eam tres noctes dantur*. This agreement is followed by requests for household goods—*aera, vinum, oleum, triticum*, supplies in kind from the suitor’s home farm (12)—until the hetaira has absorbed into her possessions whatever her lovers can offer. During the play Plautus mentions a series of small demands for maintenance (52–56: *centum quae poscat parat*) and repairs. Again when Diniarchus mentions his inherited land and town house, we are probably supposed to assume he was legally independent and so could use them as security to borrow the money wanted by Phronesium.

Phronesium’s quest for *datores* leads to one paradox, when Diniarchus offers her ten kisses and she retorts *plus pollicere quam ego a te postulo*: “You’re promising more than I ask” (373–74). But most of the lovers’ gifts are not actually solicited by Phronesium, and at 443–47 Diniarchus spontaneously decides to make her a gift of five *minae*, adding an extra *mina* for the banquet. Each scene makes the parade of competing gifts more vivid. The soldier Stratophanes woos her with two Syrian servant girls, whom he values at twenty *minae* (543–44), but she sensibly rejects them as a source of expense, not income.¹⁷

In the next scene, Cyamus the cook enters heading a parade of slaves bearing Diniarchus’s lavish gifts, and commenting incidentally on his own defalcations from the shopping money (561–62). Next, Truculentus gives Astaphium twenty *minae* stolen from Strabax’s father as a deposit (687–90: *rabonem*, i.e., *arrabonem*) for a night of her companionship. Finally at his last appearance, Stratophanes reports that he is giving Phronesium a *mina* of gold in hope that she will forgive him (900) and treat his previous gifts as acceptable. In return she assails him with

a list of expenses entailed by rearing “his” son, and he is forced by Strabax’s competition to escalate, presenting Phronesium with a talent of silver. The contest in giving reaches a climax without any clear denouement.

Her lovers have been chosen to represent ancient society—town, country, and overseas—and Phronesium’s own experience, past, present, and future.¹⁸ We should imagine the soldier as a grizzled forty-year-old, Diniarchus in his early thirties, and Strabax as driven by the calf love of a teenager. Together they represent the community. Diniarchus was Phronesium’s preferred lover (like Phaedria in *Eunuchus*), the soldier a recent lover taken on during Diniarchus’s absence, a few months back, and act 5 shows that Strabax will be her immediate future. How did Phronesium reach her present level of comfort and control over her lovers? We are never told, but it will be helpful at this point to sample the transformation from maiden to hetaira and the beginning of a “professional” career from Greek and Roman sources.

Lucian’s *Dialogues of Courtesans* are generally thought to derive from the plots of New Comedy, but they also include conversations that could have had no part in the action of any comedy. Of three dialogues between mother and daughter, one (number 3) shows the mother scolding her daughter for public misbehavior at a symposium and the daughter’s defense in terms of jealousy between rival courtesans; in another (7) the mother warns her daughter against wasting her love and resources on the useless Chaereas, a handsome young aristocrat. This girl is clearly a citizen, since Chaereas keeps promising her marriage, but his promises will not be realized: he talks constantly of the money he will have when his father dies, but he does not even pay his share in the entertainments of his friends. He is simply a waste of her efforts.¹⁹

More interesting by far is the dialogue (number 6, at 292–93) between mother Crobyle and her daughter, Corinna, after the girl’s initiation into commercial sex. They are citizens (so the girl is eligible in theory for marriage), and their poverty arises from the early death of Crobyle’s citizen husband the blacksmith. For seven months they were able to live on the two *minae* they obtained by selling his tools: the mother (herself too old to earn money by her sexuality) has been waiting for her daughter to mature. Now she has had her first experience, earning a *mina* overnight, and her mother promises her wealth, especially if she does not limit herself to impecunious young men but sleeps with substantial farmers and ship’s captains (295). As with the modern drug trade, the alternatives are extreme poverty in return for honest wool work and lavish wealth for those who turn tricks.

There was something like a caste of courtesans, a sequence of mother and daughter families; indeed an aging courtesan without a daughter would look for a foundling to rear as her economic substitute.²⁰ Courtesans like Thais in Terence’s

Eunuchus had mothers but no known fathers; these women had often moved from their own community in company with a lover, like Thais's Samian mother, whom we find living in Rhodes (*Samia mea mater fuit, habitabat Rhodi* 107), while Thais herself has moved to Athens as companion to her protector (*illo quocum tum uno rem habebam / hospite abii huc*, 119–20).²¹

For the widow and her child there was little alternative. The poor widow Sostrata in *Adelphoe* is not confined to her own earnings from wool working: the women have a skilled slave, Geta, who “alone supports the whole household” (*alit illas; solus omnem familiam / sustentat*, 480–82). This is an Athenian rather than Roman phenomenon, in which a craftsman slave lives independently but gives (most of) his wage to his master. Another option would be the intervention of a male kinsman or family friend to provide a dowry or find a husband for the girl; this is used by Micio in *Adelphoe* for the fiction with which he scares his son Aeschinus into confessing that he has impregnated the citizen girl next door (650–59).

More often such women turned to the irregular income of casual or even contractual sex. Thus Cleareta in *Asinaria* shows young Argyrippus the door when he has no more money to give, because she is exploring another option, the exclusive contract that Diabolus and his parasite will present to her daughter. But contracts did not have to be exclusive:²² it is peculiar to this play that both Argyrippus and his rival can talk of exclusive contracts. In fact Argyrippus is able to “steal” his scheming father's money so as to resume his relationship with his girl—a temporary solution that provides the finale of the comedy.

Cistellaria, adapted from Menander's *Synaristosai*, opens with a scene of hospitality offered by Selenium to her friends Gymnasium and her mother (called simply Lena) in the rooms rented for her by her lover Alcesimarchus. Gymnasium supports her household by casual sex; Selenium, who is a citizen (as will be revealed in time for a recognition), has known only the one lover, Alcesimarchus, and the play opens with their enforced separation as his parents expect him to marry a previously unknown “cousin.” The second half of the play is obscured by lacunae, but all ends well. Melaenis, Selenium's “mother,” was merely a foster parent and has access to the recognition tokens that will prove Selenium to be a sister of that unknown cousin and, hence, the destined future wife of her present lover.

The Bacchis sisters of Plautus's *Bacchides* represent a single generation and are provided with no family history (but the opening of the play is defective). They appear to be independent, with their own home, where they can invite the returning Mnesilochus to a welcome dinner, which is actually half staged. But during Mnesilochus's prolonged absence, they have run out of support, and one of them is being contracted to a soldier for a year (*mercedem annuam*, 14). This fate can be

prevented only if the lover steals his father's money, and the play is moved by the trickery of his slave Syrus (in Menander Chrysalus). Both son and slave will buy their immunity by the courtesans' successful seduction of the two fathers of both young men. These young women exercise control through their sexuality, but their social position is weak and their eventual fates are grim.

A Glorious Counterexample—Thais

I come next to Thais, the heroine of Terence's *Eunuchus* and the Roman version of Chrysis in Menander's play.²³ Capable as she is, how much of the action can she control? Terence tells us her story as the explanation she offers to her young lover Phaedria of her need to keep him out of sight. The trigger of the action is Thais's desire to rescue her younger "sister," Pamphila, the little girl kidnapped by pirates from Sunium in Attica and brought up by Thais's mother, as a chaste young lady: when Thais herself came away to Athens with her patron (*hospes*) and the mother died, the little girl was sold as a slave by a cruel uncle. Luckily she was purchased by the soldier Thraso, Thais's other lover, but one of the things Thais must manage is to protect the girl from Thraso's indiscriminate lust and conceal her own involvement with young Phaedria until she has secured her "sister's" future.

The turning point of the play is the (to us, shocking) rape of the sister by Phaedria's younger brother, Chaerea, a rape that, once her citizen status is established, will lead to their marriage and to the generic expectation that Pamphila and Chaerea will live happily ever after. But contriving this happy reversal requires two deviations from the normal pattern. First, both the soldier and Phaedria give Thais slaves—not money or commodities but more mouths to feed. (It is Phaedria's eunuch—an exceptional luxury—whom Chaerea supplants in order to gain access to Thais's household and commit the rape). Second, if the rape is essential to the action, Thais has to leave her house. Instead of entertaining the soldier and the sister's kinsman in her own home (a sizable establishment with at least two women slaves, Pythias and Dorias), she goes out and offstage, leaving her sister at the mercy of the disguised Chaerea.

Thais's position as a foreigner leaves her vulnerable; from the beginning she has told us that she needed an Athenian patron to protect her (147–49), and in the last act she obtains a guarantee of the patronage of Phaedria and Chaerea's father (1039–40). No woman, Attic or metic, could defend herself without a male citizen protector. Still, we shall see her control two major problems: avoiding the soldier's jealousy of Phaedria and contacting Chremes the kinsman to effect the

recognition of her sister (203–5). But the central acts of the intrigue place a severe test on her ability to control her world.

By the end of act 3 (line 614), Chaerea has infiltrated Thais's home disguised as the eunuch Dorus, but the follow-up of this narrative is diverted by the arrival of Chremes, the highborn Athenian brother of the little sister, Pamphila. He speaks in soliloquy, explaining his suspicions that Thais's questioning aims to suggest she herself is his lost sister (524–25): this is the reason he claims he cannot return when Pythias reports that Thais has asked him to come back. Instead Dorias is told to escort him to the soldier's place (*ad militem*). Chremes's departure is followed by Chaerea's rape narrative and a report by Thais's servant girl of the quarrel developing between Thais and the soldier over this newcomer whom he suspects of being a rival (623). But this is interrupted by a new crisis: Pythias's hue and cry over the rape, which she has discovered (643–726), followed by the return of Chremes, somewhat drunk, and Thais herself. Luckily Thais does not yet know about the rape and can honestly assure Chremes that his sister has been brought up and treated properly (748).

Back home Thais and Chremes will be besieged by the soldier with his kitchen squaddies. Thais has resumed control. Both the men, Chremes inside her house and Thraso outside, are cowards, and Chremes wants to run away to the Forum to get witnesses (763). Now it is Thais who must advise Chremes on how to handle the situation: he should declare that this is his sister and display her tokens; Thraso in turn needs Gnatho to rally him as he takes up his commanding position in the rear (781–82) hidden at a distance, *procul hinc ex occulto* (787). Boosted by Thais, Chremes stands firm, and it is left for Thraso and his cohorts to beat a retreat.

All this has postponed Thais's discovery of the rape, which Pythias does not explain to her until 817–18, and Chaereas's confession; he may indeed have thought Pamphila a fellow slave, not a citizen (858), but in Roman terms he puts everything right by begging Thais to let him marry the girl (885–90) now that her citizen status is confirmed. The play has entered the homestretch, and the happy ending is delayed only by Pythias's trick to rattle Parmeno. But is it a happy ending? Thais has engineered her sister's rescue and marriage. How is she rewarded? By the agreement of the men, behind her back, to share her favors between Phaedria and the soldier.²⁴ This arrangement is the only agreed sharing of a prostitute's services in Roman comedy, but Plautus provides evidence both for annual sex contracts and for their exclusivity clauses in the *syngraphae* of *Bacch.* fr. 10: *nec a quoquam acciperes alio mercedem annuam nisi ab sese* (that you will not receive a yearly salary from anyone else except from him) and *Asin.* 751, *ut secum esset noctes et dies, hunc annum totum* (that she be with him day and night this whole year).

Women's Methods and Means of Control in Comedy

It is of course men's sexual frailty that surrenders them to women's control: the youthful wild oats of sons, the violent passions of mercenary soldiers, the lecherous wandering husbands—all these male behaviors put women in control at least until their partners are reconciled. And women's methods can vary from emotional blackmail to playing a man against his rival. An extreme case is *Casina*, based on Diphilus's *Kleroumenoi*. As the title of the Greek model suggests, the main action centers on the spectacular tableau scene where the rival candidates of the lecherous husband and his shrewd wife compete to draw the lot that will entitle one of them to marry Casina. But these candidates are slaves, for whom the marriage can be only *contubernium*, and the prologue has ruled out this possibility by telling the audience that Casina is of citizen origin and has been brought up by Cleostrata, the wife of Lysidamus, to be chaste and respectable. The prologue also tells the audience that both the old father and his son, Euthynicus, are in love with her, but that nothing untoward will happen to her during the play. Even in his absence, his mother gives her concern to her son's interests (63), but his love, which Plautus tells us will end in marriage, is hardly compatible with the setup of the competitive lottery. Indeed, both Euthynicus and Casina herself are kept completely absent offstage: Plautus is explicit that he has delayed Euthynicus's return from his mission out of town, an obvious contrivance that is probably Plautus's own invention,²⁵ but offers no comment or explanation about the absence of Casina.

Where is Casina supposed to be during the play? In view of the recognition plot outlined by the prologue, it would have been easy for Plautus to report that Cleostrata had sent her to the country under protective guard until the men had played out their sexual shenanigans and then bring her back when her birth parents, Alcesimus and Myrrhine, could identify their lost daughter and Euthynicus claim his citizen bride. But Plautus was not writing for a convention of social workers and presumably wanted to keep the potential titillation of an audience uncertain throughout the so-called slave wedding (*serviles nuptiae*, 68) of exactly who was under that bridal veil and what would come of the amorous encounter.

So we have a recognition play stripped of its foreshadowed recognition: the prologue does not reveal that Casina is destined to marry the son of the house. Though the audience is assured that she will turn out to be free, chaste, and a citizen, her status will remain ambiguous until the very last few lines (1012–15), suspended during the sex farce. The women are quick to guess Lysidamus's conspiracy with his groom and (reluctant) neighbor. Determined to obstruct, they resist the invitation to get together in Cleostrata's house in order to leave the neighbor's house clear so that Lysidamus can force himself upon Casina. They use

this time to perpetrate one of the world's oldest tricks—the “false bride.” In this case the blushing bride is Chalinus, Euthynicus's oversexed squire, whose violent response both terrifies and shames old Lysidamus.

Over a hundred lines elapse between the prologue, which leaves us with a guarantee that Casina will be proved both chaste and freeborn, and the first mention of the lottery to assign her to a choice of slave competitors (296), which is set up once Chalinus emerges with the urn and lots (351; cf. 358). Another sixty lines will pass before Cleostrata pulls out what turns out to be Olympio's lot (416–17) and Lysidamus speaks confidently of his arrangement with the neighbor Alcesimus to enjoy a discreet *chambre séparée*, where he can deflower Olympio's new bride.

Comedy is successful because it is heartless, and most of us can laugh at stage mockery of wives. But consider in terms of Athenian bourgeois morality what Lysidamus's adultery is doing to his household:

1. He is depriving his wife of her conjugal rights—which might be a relief, but as she says, “I don't even have the choice of exercising my conjugal rights” (190: *nec mihi ius meum optinendi optio est*). He is also overriding her careful upbringing of her protégée by a sexual demand that one might compare to stepfather incest.
2. He is disqualifying the young, inexperienced girl from the marriage that her citizen birth entitles her to. When the play opens she is a virgin; now she is to be molested by an unattractive old fellow whom she previously knew as a sort of uncle.
3. He is cheating his son by corrupting the girl he loves.
4. He is coercing the groom Olympio into marriage and at the same time preempting his access to the bride (one thinks of the *Marriage of Figaro*).

Only the conspiring maid Pardalisca, who actually enjoys a tour de force of melodrama, remains unharmed. Of course we must not take too seriously this ancient trick—but this false bride is being raped/seduced in a real family. These women are in control and obtain complete success in the foiling of Lysidamus's plan, with a bonus in witnessing his immediate shame and terror.²⁶

About a third of Plautus's comedies (*Aulularia*, *Captivi*, *Curculio*, *Mostellaria*, *Pseudolus*, *Rudens*, *Stichus*, and *Trinummus*) work out their plots without women, or at least without women as personalities controlling the action. Terence's early plays (*Andria*, *HT*) have no significant women. Most of them are kept offstage (especially if virtuous, like the offstage Pamphilas of *Andria*, *Eunuchus*, *Phormio*, and *Adelphoe*) or objectified, like Ctesipho's silent flute girl in *Adelphoe*. But if

matrons like Nausistrata in *Phormio* or Sostrata in *Hecyra* exercise little power, Terence does imbue them with the natural authority of their integrity. If we were awarding prizes for edifying and moral entertainment set in decorous households, he would come high on the list.²⁷ But when our interest is in fully developed female personalities in comedy, we have to admit that Terence represents a step backward from Plautine comedy, and even the beginning of comedy's decline, leaving the next generations with a choice between the tits-and-ass frivolity of mime and a sentimental genre that will come into its own only in the novels and operas of the nineteenth century.

NOTES

1. At Rome the woman's dowry did not pass into the possession of her husband, who merely acted as its steward. It was intended for her own maintenance if she was widowed or divorced, and for her children after her death. On Roman dowry law, see Gardner 1990 and Treggiari 1992.

2. This comedy features two women in control—the wealthy *matrona* Artemona and the hardened procuress Cleareta, mother and controller of the young Philaenium (cf. 147 *mater tu, eadem era es*). These women have opposing interests and purposes, since Argyrippus's mother would prohibit his affair, whereas Cleareta needs him to go on paying for the continued use of her daughter.

3. About Turpilius's *Epicleros* we can say very little: a single fragment seems to show the speaker (the husband again?) tormented by anxiety, but there is no evidence about its cause beyond the implications of the play's title that the wealthy wife is in some way the cause of his troubles.

4. Artemona of *Asinaria* has the same reproaches to make: *fundum alienum arat, incultum familiarem deserit*, 874.

5. See Fantham et al. 1994, chap. 6.

6. See Fantham 2004b, 22–41, on the Lena's attitude in *Cistellaria*.

7. The fact that the woman is named only by her profession, *Lena* (the procuress or brothel-keeper), is significant. Unlike Selenium, Gymnasium, and Melaenis, she does not reappear after she has served to introduce the opening scene; she is only what ancient critics call a *prosopon protatikon*.

8. Gilula 2004, 240. But (see next note) Gilula reads both Melaenis's adoption of the baby girl and her revelation of Selenium's real origin to Phanostrata as selfishly motivated.

9. It took David Konstan's experience and shrewd judgment to make me recognize this broad-scale female solidarity in Roman comedy.

10. Melaenis is not consistently portrayed; she wants a baby girl or boy to deceive a foreign lover, but she then preserves Selenium's decency, bringing her up *bene et pudice*: she helps Phanostrata but does so to win her support; whereas most *meretrices* would have

reared a daughter to replace them when they became too old for the job, Melaenis lets her daughter stay faithful to one lover. Here I differ slightly in emphasis from Gilula.

11. The female conspiracies in Aristophanes's *Lysistrata* and *Ecclesiazousai* are absurd fantasies that do not represent historical social networks among women.

12. As the play's title, Phronesium's name would have been more appropriate than the incidental boor who appears in only two scenes. Michael Fontaine (2010, 21–29) has recently argued at length that Plautus did not call his courtesan *Phron-esium*, “the shrewd one,” but *Phryne-sium*, or the “little Phryne,” after the well-known Athenian courtesan.

13. Cf. 23, *Venus penes quam summa summarum amantium redit* (Venus, under whose control the chiefest goal of lovers belongs), and 714, *promove venustatem tuam amanti, ut gaudeat quom perdis* (Fetch out your sexiness for your lover, so that he delights in your ruining him).

14. She was apparently brought up by a single mother, as implied in 472.

15. See Dutsch (2008, 113–16) on women's *malitia*: further Fantham 2008 on *malitia* in comedy and its evolution as a legal concept.

16. We might compare the soldier's demand in *Bacch.* 14–15: *nec a quoquam acciperes alio mercedem annuum / nisi a sese*.

17. In Terence's *Eunuchus* both Phaedria and Thais's soldier-lover present her with slaves, but these are inherent in the plot, in which Thais tries to protect the “sister,” whom the soldier has purchased, and Chaerea gets into her home disguised as the eunuch who is his brother's gift.

18. Cf. Dessen 1977.

19. While comedy does not offer any case of direct wooing of a citizen girl, in real life a girl without a living father might be reduced to the condition of hetairai. In the similar scene of *Asinaria*, where Cleareta scolds her daughter for wasting her *opera* on the unrewarding and penniless Argyrippus, neither mother nor daughter is a citizen.

20. As in *Cistellaria*.

21. On mothers who raise their daughters to serve as hetairai, see Strong 2012.

22. Neaera in Pseudo-Demosthenes 59 made a contract with two former lovers to share her favors for a year. Argyrippus himself seems to be thinking of a similar monopoly at 229–30: *audi, dic, quid me aequom censes pro illa tibi dare, / annum hunc ne cum quiquam alio siet?* and 234–35: *sed in leges meas / dabo ut tu scire possis: perpetuum annum hanc mihi ut serviat / nec quemquam interea alium admittat*.

23. I have argued in Fantham 2000 that Terence created the tricks wrongly attributed to Thais from the behavior of bad girls like Phronesium.

24. Modern scholars (James, Lloyd-Jones, Fantham) have objected to this demeaning of the heroine, but she could not with dignity participate in this negotiation, which in any case simply maintains the current state of affairs to which Phaedria has acquiesced. Like the rape it offends our values (what kind of marriage can develop from an initial rape?), but evidence from Greek oratory such as Pseudo-Demosthenes 59 *Against Neaera* shows that such sharing of a hetaira was normal. Neaera solicited support (by letter?) from past clients

and organized her own purchase by a pair of lovers, Timanoridas and Eukrates, who became her joint owners when the brothel that employed her was liquidated. See Carey 1992 and Hamel 2003, 29–30.

25. By claiming that he was kept on the far side of a local stream by a broken-down bridge!

26. Cleostrata's goal, like the audience's mind-set, is short term, focused on a day's misdeeds, unless we are to assume that Lysidamus will be frightened into reforming. On Cleostrata, see also James in this volume.

27. See Fantham 2003–4.

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Mater, Oratio, Filia

Listening to Mothers in Roman Comedy

SHARON L. JAMES

Female speech in Roman comedy has been much studied, often in the interests of identifying elements of Roman women's language.¹ But speech can also help to show how Roman women managed their lives, how they handled the men around them, how they understood their roles in their society, and most of all, what was important to them. Although I look here at formulations and expressions associated with women in Roman comedy, I focus not on linguistic formulas but on what women's speech tells us about the contexts, purposes, goals, and conditions of women's lives, as they are reflected in Roman comedy. My test group is citizen mothers, whose speech, as I will argue, reveals a broadly held but rarely articulated anxiety among the citizen classes.

Women's Speech in Roman Comedy: Overview and Methodology

The primary characteristics attributed to women's speech in comedy are softness and deference (Adams 1984, 76).² Their language is ruled not only by gender but by class and immediate context (Adams 1984, 66–67; Dutch 2008, 16). Regardless, certain expressions are primarily female: women use *pol* and *edepol* more than men do; only women say *mecastor* and *ecastor*. “Polite modifiers,” in J. N. Adams's term, such as *obsecro*, *quaeso*, and *amabo*, are characteristic of women, as are intimate forms of address, especially *mi/mea* + vocative.

But we would expect to find such markers only in conversation, rather than in monologue. What Adams has identified is actually female conversational

style, a subset of the whole of female speech.³ A complete review of his findings is hardly necessary; here I focus on polite modifiers (usually, but not always, modifier + imperative) and endearments or expressions of intimacy, as useful indicators of situational dynamics.⁴ A tendency toward softness and conciliation is predictable, as women in New Comedy have little power. But, as we shall see, softness and deference disappear when women conduct business conversations or monologues.

A quick summary: women's speech is more female when addressed to men, particularly citizen men. Women speaking to other women rarely add modifiers (such as *obsecro* and *amabo*), and never with slaves (see Adams 1984, 67). In monologue women employ few female markers.⁵ These patterns suggest a practiced linguistic strategy: female speech changes radically, depending on immediate context and the social structures governing women's relations to their addressees.⁶ My analysis seeks to separate the strands of influence on given situations.

Comic mothers divide into two groups: powerful, wealthy wives (the *uxor dotata*), and powerless mothers.⁷ The *uxor dotata*—always the mother of a son—has a husband guilty of attempted or actual hanky-panky (Cleostrata of *Casina*, Artemona of *Asinaria*, Dorippa of *Mercator*, Nausistrata of *Phormio*). These women use little deference: they challenge and prod their husbands, protecting their own interests and punishing the improprieties of the wayward *senes*.⁸ The powerless mothers have often lost either a daughter or the daughter's father.⁹ They desperately seek solutions to their problems and those of their daughters.¹⁰ If they are married, they seem not to be *dotatae*. Having no financial power, these women use emotional manipulation against men when they need an advantage, employ plenty of polite modifiers, and issue imperatives only to slaves. Their speech reflects the extreme vulnerability of the mother whose daughter is at risk.¹¹ This pattern is invariable: mothers of sons, even undowered mothers, have a status and power that mothers of daughters do not enjoy, even when they are the same woman.

I may observe that my approach differs from a recent and comprehensive study of gender and discourse in Roman comedy (Dutsch 2008), in that Dorota Dutsch seeks “structures of thought circumscribing the feminine identities in the plays” and considers those structures “through the prisms of other, both ancient and modern, discourses of the feminine” (2008, 13). I am seeking something like lived experience in the form of the conscious concerns and goals of these female characters, as articulated in language much “circumscribed” by the rules and practices that govern comic women and the historical Roman women they reflect. The speech of mothers in comedy, as it turns out, reveals even more than I had expected.

The *uxor dotata*: Cleostrata of Casina

Cleostrata's conversations and monologues offer good examples of female speech dynamics.¹² The conversation of Cleostrata and her neighbor Myrrhina shows a contextualized use of modified, plain, and intensified imperatives.¹³ Myrrhina observes Cleostrata's distress: *salve mecastor, / sed quid tu es tristis, amabo?* (172–73: "Oh my goodness, hi, why are you so unhappy, sweetie?").¹⁴ Cleostrata complains of mistreatment by her husband, and Myrrhina seeks clarification: *Hem, quid est? dic idem (nam pol hau satis meo corde accepi querellas tuas) opsecro* (186–87: "Hm, what's that? Say it again, please, because I haven't rightly taken in your complaints"). When Cleostrata explains that her husband is plotting to get his hands on her maid Casina, Myrrhina becomes agitated: *opsecro tace* (196: "please, hush!").¹⁵

Cleostrata's response tells us much about women's speech: *nam hic nunc licet dicere: nos sumus* (197: "We can say what we want, it's just us"). In other words, when we're alone we can say what we want, or talk as we want. This is a striking sign of women's awareness that their speech is circumscribed, that there are subjects they ought not to discuss in public and, perhaps, words and formulations they ought not to be overheard using. When Myrrhina agrees (*ita est*, 197), she marks that awareness as shared.¹⁶ She rebukes Cleostrata for considering Casina her own property rather than her husband's. Cleostrata disagrees, and Myrrhina lets fly: *tace sis, stulta, et mi ausculta. noli sis tu illi advorsari, / sine amet, sine quod libet id faciat, quando tibi nil domi deliquom est* (204–5: "Shut **right up**, idiot, and listen to me. **Don't you go** opposing him; / let him fool around, do what he wants, since you're not lacking anything at home"). Cleostrata thinks Myrrhina is crazy (207: *satin sana es?*), and Myrrhina in turn accuses her of being stupid (*insipiens*, 209) and risking divorce.¹⁷ Their language shows no deference, politeness, or female markers.¹⁸ The unexpected accusations of stupidity (*stulta*, 204; *insipiens*, 209) and insanity (207) suggest a directness in female speech among women.

Cleostrata and Myrrhina use intensifiers when no citizen males can hear such unwomanly speech. The polite modifier *obsecro* (195) indicates emotional urgency, and the intensifier/modifier combination, *age amabo*, both softens and concentrates the circumstantial urgency.¹⁹ Myrrhina's reply, *impetras, abeo*, acknowledges Cleostrata's agitation. When they can speak freely, the two women dispense with polite talk and use plain imperatives, as well as abuses (*stulta*, *insipiens*, etc.). When emotional intensity dictates, and no men can hear, intensifiers arise.

The speeches of Cleostrata and Lysidamus shed further light on female imperatives. Trying to manipulate his wife into approving his plan for Casina (i.e., to give her to his *vilicus*, so that he himself may have access to her), Lysidamus wheedles her: *uxor mea meaque amoenitas, quid tu agis?* (229: "My wife, my darling,

what are you doing?”). Catching a whiff of his expensive perfume, she sarcastically employs a polite modifier, mocking his pseudo-affectionate speech: *unde hic, amabo, unguenta olent?* (235: “Where do these perfume smells here come from, sweetie?”). His frightened response further indicates her power (here both emotional and financial).²⁰ When she suspects that he has been drinking, she lets him have it, using an intensifier: *immo age ut lubet bibe, es, disperde rem* (248: “Oh yes, **go on**, drink, eat, waste your estate, just as you like!”).

As if signaling that her speech has reached the limits of propriety for women, Lysidamus rebukes her, accusing her of having lost control of herself and of having forgotten that her husband should have power over her (249–53). She retorts that he has forgotten his own proper place and behavior (259–61):

CL. mirum ecastor te senecta aetate officium tuom
non meminisse. LY. quid iam? CL. quia, si facias recte aut commode,
me sinas curare ancillas, quae mea est curatio.

CL. Goodness, it’s amazing that at your old age you don’t
recall your duty. LY. What’s that? CL. Because, if you were to do things
rightly
or properly, you’d let me look after the maids, who are my business.

In this scene, the two types of power at issue—financial and emotional—can be observed. As husband and wife seek supremacy, they trade off modes and tones of speech.

But Cleostrata is never deferential with her husband. Even her modifier (*amabo*, line 235), is highly charged with sarcasm and accusation: she undercuts her husband by turning his *blanditiae* against him. Cleostrata never employs the soft speech (*oratio blanda*) that is thought to be typical of women’s language in comedy. In this and other respects, she is typical of the Plautine *uxor dotata*. She utterly defies Adams’s description of women in Roman comedy as deferential and conciliatory. Indeed, her speech, which ranges from enraged outbursts to sly wordplay and stern rebukes, can rarely even be categorized as female. She regularly uses *ecastor* (355, 531, 538, 576, 578, 982) and *pol* (370, 589, 982), but never expresses submission or deference. When she says to her husband *opsecro*, for instance, at 232, she follows it with *sanun es?*—hardly a deferential or conciliatory remark. When she says *mi vir* (586 and 588),²¹ she is (as MacCary and Willcock point out ad loc.) being sarcastic. She speaks harshly about him in monologue, vowing, for instance, to torment him with hunger, thirst, and disagreeable words (149–60). She is angry and sarcastic about Lysidamus and his co-conspirator Alcesimus,

calling them “disgusting losers” and “old goats” (*ignavissumis*, 534; *vetulis vervecibus*, 535).

To her husband’s face, Cleostrata can be harsh, calling him a “nothing, a gray-haired flea” (*eho tu nihili, cana culex*, 240). She shows contempt for his irresponsible behavior, and she reminds him, as noted above, of his age and his obligations (258–59). When she reports that their neighbor Alcesimus has not sent over Myrrhina (as Lysidamus had told him to do, so that his house would be empty for himself and Casina), he complains that she was inadequately persuasive, and she rebukes him (584–86):

LY. vitium tibi istuc maxumumst: blanda es parum.

CL. non matronarum officiumst, sed meretricium,
viris alienis, mi vir, subblandirier.

LY. That’s your greatest fault: you don’t sweet-talk enough.

CL. It is not the job of wives but of whores, my husband,
to sweet-talk other women’s husbands.

As Cleostrata points out, Lysidamus has made a category mistake, expecting her to speak with *blanditia*. MacCary and Willcock (1976, ad loc.) point out that “*blanda* is the exact epithet for a *meretrix*,” whose business requires sweet and soft talk. But Lysidamus’s complaint suggests that her speech in general is not soft or deferential—in other words, that absence or failure of such womanly softness as *blanditia* is a characteristic of hers. He evidently believes his wife should be more submissive with him.²²

Cleostrata explains her opposition to her husband as a matter of propriety: Casina should go to their son’s agent; parents should support their sons; she should not speak meretriciously to her neighbor’s husband; her husband should not chase girls. She is consistently concerned with propriety, especially with behavior appropriate to age, and she expresses anger at her husband, but she does not torment him in his final humiliation. Her confidence, in dealing with Lysidamus, seems to derive not only from a dowry but from her consciousness of being in the right.

I suggest a third motive: Cleostrata has raised Casina as a daughter, so her response to her husband’s erotic designs on the girl combines protectiveness toward Casina and repulsion at Lysidamus’s urge toward a form of incest (see also Fantham, in this volume). The play would not exist if Cleostrata could protect Casina from sexual predation, so Plautus puts her in the position of having to favor her son’s interests (which might equally be considered incestuous, though not in Greek

terms, since they don't have the same mother).²³ Because the prologue has made it clear that nothing bad will happen to Casina, that she will turn out to be a citizen who can marry Euthynicus, the audience can relax in the confidence that the lecherous old man will not succeed. In the play's many moments of offstage female conspiracy, we may imagine that Cleostrata's protectiveness toward Casina would have been much reinforced, particularly if we read Pardalisca's "sword" speech as voicing Casina's distress (see Andrews 2004). I venture therefore to say that an unspoken but probable—within this absurd plot—concern for Cleostrata is anxiety about Casina, founded in her maternal feelings toward the girl.

The other angry *dotatae* also feel free to speak strongly to their husbands, to express anger and disgust with those husbands, and to threaten divorce (something Cleostrata never does).²⁴ A full review of the wealthy wives is impossible here, but it is fair to say that they all also show that they take their marriages seriously, that they want their husbands to do likewise, and that they value their own consciousness of virtue and proper behavior. They manifest self-respect and confidence. Their speech reflects all these characteristics and virtually none of the female speech markers of *blanditia*, deference, and intimacy employed in conciliation. We must look elsewhere for these features of female speech.

The Powerless Mother

The undowered and unwed mothers lack the power of the *uxor dotata*, and their speech reflects their lack of confidence. But even these often-desperate women do not practice constant deference. In urgent circumstances, they stand up to unpleasant treatment by men. Sostrata of Terence's *Self-Tormentor* demonstrates the contexts for deferential female speech in Roman comedy, contexts governed by the emotional dynamics of a situation. When she realizes that the girl in her house is their daughter, whom her irascible husband, Chremes, had ordered her to expose some sixteen years earlier, she must tell him. She approaches with a classic instance of female deference—a diffident exclamation and a vocative + *mi*: *ehem mi vir* (622)—and proceeds with conciliation: *primum hoc te oro, ne quid credas me aduersum edictum tuom / facere ausam* (623–24: “First, I beg you, don't think I dared to act against your order”). He accuses her of naïveté for having given the baby to another woman (631), and she responds in very female style, with an intimate address: *perii! quid ego feci? si peccavi, mi Chreme, / insciens feci* (631–32: “I'm done for! What have I done? If I made a mistake, my Chremes, I didn't mean to”). He utters twenty lines of patronizing arrogance, to which she responds meekly (644–46):

mi Chreme, peccavi, fateor: vincor. nunc hoc te obsecro,
quando tuos est animus, mi vir, natura ignoscentior,
ut meae stultitiae in iustitia tua sit aliquid praesidi.

I did wrong, my Chremes, I admit it. I'm beaten. Now I beg you,
my husband, since your spirit is more generous by nature,
that there be some protection for my foolishness in your justice.

Her conciliation is so successful that it is tempting to think she is intentionally overdoing it. She disparages herself in specifically female terms: she had put a ring in with the baby, out of silly womanly superstition: *ut stultae et misere omnes sumus / religiosae* (649–50). He learns that the girl recently brought indoors is wearing that ring, realizes that she is their daughter, and hauls his relieved wife indoors.

Throughout this scene, Sostrata uses nearly every marker of female speech and is thoroughly subservient. But when Chremes decides to pretend to disinherit their son, Clitipho (having learned that Clitipho tricked him into paying for the services of the expensive courtesan Bacchis), Sostrata fights back. Her intimate expressions and polite modifiers are mixed with strong and direct oppositional speech (1003–5):

profecto nisi caves **tu homo**, aliquid gnato conficies mali.
idque adeo miror, quo modo
tam ineptum quicquam tibi venire in mentem, mi vir, potuit.

for sure if you don't look out, **man**, you'll do something bad to our son.
And I'm amazed at how something so thoughtless could come into your
head, my husband.

He calls her *stulta* (1009), and she says, in frustration, *oh! / iniquos es qui me tacere de re tanta postules* (1010–11: "Oh! You're unfair, asking me to keep quiet about such a great matter!"). The next few lines present a complex dynamic (1013–16):

SOS. non vides quantum mali ex ea re excites?
subditum se suspicatur. CHR. "subditum" ain tu? SOS. Sic erit,
mi vir. CHR. Confitere? SOS. au, te obsecro, istuc inimicis siet.
egon confitear meum non esse filium, qui sit meus?

SOS. Don't you see what trouble you're stirring up from this business?
He'll think he's adopted. CHR. "Adopted," you say? SOS. That's what

he'll think, my husband. CHR. Are you confessing? SOS. Oh, please,
leave that to our enemies.

Should I confess that he *isn't* my son who *is* mine?

Here she uses an intimate form of address (*mi vir*), but her oath (*au*) and beseeching verb (*obsecro*) express impatience, frustration, and urgency, rather than deference or conciliation.

When Clitipho arrives, Sostrata again oscillates between emotional and intimate female language and assertive, relatively unmodified speech. Clitipho makes an absurd appeal, asking her to name his true parents, and she responds with distress: *obsecro, mi gnate, ne istuc in animum inducas tuom, / alienum esse te* (1028–29: “Please, my son, don’t take it into your head that / you’re someone else’s”). When he insists that he is adopted, she bursts out, first to her husband, in very female terms: *miseram me! hocin quaesisti, obsecro?* (1029: “Oh my, no! Is that what you wanted, please?”).²⁵ She then returns, a bit more assertively, to her son: *at cave posthac, si me amas, umquam istuc verbum ex te audiam* (1030–31: “Look out now, if you love me, that I never hear that word from you again”).

Chremes torments his wife and son further by announcing that he will give his entire estate as Antiphila’s dowry. Sostrata bursts out, in very female language: *mi vir, te obsecro / ne facias* (1048–49: “My husband, I beg you, don’t do this!”). Here she uses an intimate address and a deferential plea, both strongly associated with female speech. She urges him again, when their neighbor Menedemus asks him to forgive Clitipho: “*age, Chreme mi*” (1052). When Chremes states his terms, namely, that the boy must marry, Clitipho hesitates and Sostrata steps in assertively with *ad me recipio: / faciet* (1056–57) and *faciet omnia* (1048). She tries to reconcile Clitipho to the idea: *gnate mi, ego pol tibi dabo illam lepidam, quem tu facile ames, / filiam Phanocratae nostri* (1060–61: “My son, oh, I’ll give you that charming girl, whom you’ll easily love, / the daughter of our Phanocrates”), and when he in turn cavils at the choice, she makes another suggestion. This proposal he accepts, and the play ends. In this sequence, Sostrata has been alternately trying to appease and correct her husband, while also comforting and directing her son. Her speech is female and conciliatory when she needs to appease and comfort, but assertive when she needs to correct and direct. In other words, when she is soothing her son or conciliating her husband, Sostrata uses all the markers of female emotion and deference that Adams identifies; when she is disagreeing with either one, she uses strong, unmodified speech.

Adams notes the speech pattern imbalances between husbands and wives: “The lack of reciprocity cannot exclusively be put down to the sex of the speakers. *Senes* are often prickly characters . . . in the habit of rebuking their wives, whereas

matronae are more conciliatory. Different forms of address may partly reflect the types of roles which women and old men play in New Comedy" (70). He remarks of this very conversation in *Self-Tormentor*: "One cannot separate the determinants—context, roles and sex—which have influenced the methods of address" (70). My own analysis is different: Sostrata uses female deference in preparing to tell her husband that she did not expose their infant daughter, whom she now believes to be inside their house. As she fears his anger, she must be conciliatory. But as I hope to have demonstrated, the determinants can be clearly identified: she speaks deferentially to her husband when she is acting on behalf of their daughter; she is much more forceful, and much less deferential, when she acts on behalf of their son. The slave Syrus marks this protective function as standard for mothers: *matres omnes filiis / in peccato adiutrices, auxilio in paterna iniuria / solent esse* (991–93). In fulfilling this function, as Sostrata demonstrates, women tend not to behave deferentially at all.

The Unwed Mother

Although most mothers in Roman comedy are wives, the genre does not lack for unwed mothers, both citizen and noncitizen. The language of the latter (particularly a *lena* who is managing her daughter's career) is extremely interesting, but it is rarely maternal speech, and thus falls outside my focus.²⁶ The unwed citizen mother completes the pattern I am considering, so I turn to her. Philippa of *Epidicus* is a hapax in extant Roman comedy.²⁷ She was raped by Periphanes some sixteen years before the play begins; their daughter, Telestis, whom she has brought up alone, was taken prisoner after a battle, and Philippa has come to town to find her. Periphanes has belatedly developed a conscience: after his wife's death, he began looking for Philippa and Telestis, so he could do right by them. He wrongly believes that he has found his daughter, and when he espies Philippa on his street, he plans to verify her identity.

Near collapse, the agitated Philippa spots him and plans to manipulate him with speech (*aciem orationis*).²⁸ Her program involves a colossal, if well-deserved, guilt-trip:

PER. salva sis. PHIL. salutem accipio mi et meis. PER. quid ceterum?

PHIL. salvos sis: quod credidisti reddo. PER. haud accuso fidem.

novin ego te? PHIL. si ego te novi, animum inducam, ut tu noveris. 550

PER. vbi te visitavi? PHIL. inique iniuriu's. . . .

PER. meministin—PHIL. memini id quod memini. PER. at in
Epidauro—
PHIL. ah, guttula
pectus ardens mi aspersisti. PER. virgini pauperulae, 555
tuaque matri me levare paupertatem? PHIL. tun is es,
qui per voluptatem tuam in me aerumnam obsevisi gravem?
PER. ego sum. salve. PHIL. salva sum, quia te esse salvom sentio.
PER. cedo manum. PHIL. accipe. aerumnosam et miseriarum
compotem
mulierem retines. PER. quid est quod voltus turbatust tuos? 560
PHIL. filiam quam ex te suscepi—PER. quid eam? PHIL. eductam
perdidi. hostium est potita.

PER. May you be well. PHIL. I take your greeting for me and mine.
PER. What about a return?
PHIL. May you be well: I return what you entrusted to me. PER. I'm
not accusing your trust.
Do I know you? PHIL. If I knew you, I'd make sure you knew me.
PER. When did I meet up with you? PHIL. You're being cruelly unjust. . . .
PER. Do you remember? PHIL. I remember what I remember. PER. But
in Epidauros—
PHIL. Ah, you have sprinkled a
drop on my burning heart. . . . PER. You remember I lightened your poverty,
for your mother, and for you when you were a young girl? PHIL. Then
are you the one who for your own pleasure sowed a heavy trouble in me?
PER. That's me! Hello! PHIL. I'm well because I see you're well.
PER. Give me your hand. PHIL. Take it. You're getting a troubled woman,
full of woes. PER. Why that sad face?
PHIL. The daughter that I took up from you. PER. What about her?
PHIL. I brought her up and lost her. She's in the hands of the
enemy.

This extraordinary passage demonstrates how perfectly Philippa manipulates Periphanes: she focuses on her troubles past and current and presents herself as dependent on him. His response, with the diminutive *pauperulae* (555) and a reminder that he helped her family in its poverty, demonstrates her effectiveness.²⁹ In further wordplay, Philippa inverts his metaphor of lightened weight (*levare*) with her delicately phrased reminder not of rape but of pregnancy (556–57). Here

aerumna . . . *gravis* invokes both pregnancy and the trouble of childbirth, as *aerumna* can be used of labor (cf. *Amph.* 448). Wisely, Philippa avoids accusations of violence and violation. She points instead to Periphanes's sexual pleasure and her own subsequent travails. The agricultural metaphor in *opsevisiti* implicitly characterizes their sexual encounter in a context of fertility, belonging more to a marital relationship than a liaison of convenience or an act of impulse.³⁰ Periphanes confesses instantly and greets her, rather absurdly, with *salve* (558). She again twists his words, treating them literally: *salva sum, quia te esse salvom sentio* (558). By deepening their connection rather than leaving it on a formal basis or transferring it to the casual level, she both implies feeling for him and expresses dependence on him. (This line would have been delivered effectively if done somewhat tearfully, after a brief pause.) Philippa brilliantly manages Periphanes, who effectively asks her to marry him (*cedo manum*, 559).³¹

Once she is sure of Periphanes, Philippa's language changes. He calls out Acropolitis, the girl he wrongly believes to be their daughter. A very funny exchange ensues (also discussed by Richlin, in this volume), in which Acropolitis shows her own sharp wit and Philippa grows increasingly disturbed (574–80):

PHIL. quis istaec est quam tu osculum mihi ferre iubes? PER. tua filia.

PHIL. haecine? PER. haec. PHIL. egone osculum huic dem? PER. quor non, quae ex te nata sit?

PHIL. tu homo insanis. PER. egone? PHIL. tune. PER. quor?

PHIL. quia ego hanc quae siet
neque scio neque novi, neque ego hanc oculis vidi ante hunc diem.
PER. scio quid erres: quia vestitum atque ornatum immutabilem
habet haec, * * *

PHIL. * * * aliter catuli longe olent, aliter sues.
ne ego me nego nosse hanc quae sit.

PHIL. Who's this you're ordering me to kiss? PER. Your daughter!

PHIL. This one? PER. Yes! PHIL. I should kiss this girl? PER. Why not, since she was born of you?

PHIL. Man, you're insane. PER. I am? PHIL. Yes, you! PER. Why?

PHIL. Because who this girl is,
I neither know nor have any idea, nor have I ever seen her before today.
PER. Oh, I know your mistake—it's because her hair and dress are
different. * * *

PHIL. Puppies and pigs smell far different.
I'm telling you, I don't know who this girl is!

Here Philippa approaches the assertiveness of the *uxor dotata*, especially with *tu homo insanis* (576). Once she knows that Periphanes will marry her, as he has implicitly promised to do, and look after their daughter, she abandons manipulation, addressing him with the confidence of the legitimate wife who has caught her husband doing wrong.

Preliminary Conclusions about Women's Speech in Comedy

From this brief review, I draw a few conclusions. First, women talk like women, with all the markers that Adams identifies, when they have to.³² Talking with friends and loved ones, women use many more markers of affection than men do, even when their situation is relatively neutral, but they also use plain imperatives. With slaves, citizen women use few female speech markers. Women are thus, after a fashion, bilingual.³³ They use exaggerated female markers when they need to, but in private conversations they follow the same general patterns as Myrrhina and Cleostrata: modifiers signal emotional concern; endearments and *mea* + vocative signal intimacy; intensifiers (very rare) signal urgency. Expressions like *ecastor* and *pol* are salted about randomly, regardless of social class. In female-only conversations, women range all over, but show few endearments and signs of deference. In monologue, their speech is governed by their situations, their concerns, and their goals: Sostrata is assertive or deferential, regarding her son or daughter; Philippa's monologue is highly agitated and very female; Cleostrata speaks harshly. I suggest that, overall, the female markers in Roman comedy are exaggerations of the speech of women in daily life, but the pattern we see in Roman comedy, in which women use those markers when necessary and drop them otherwise, seems both unmistakable and unmistakably a reflection of the way Roman women would actually have talked. That pattern also tells us what such women cared about, what was important to them.

Listening to Comic Mothers: A Turn Away from Speech Formulations

What do we learn from this consideration of citizen mothers' speech in Roman comedy? The *uxor dotata* is greatly concerned with propriety but not with conciliating the male head of the household. When such a wife catches her husband misbehaving or accusing her unjustly, her language is hardly to be distinguished from his: anger seems to override gendered patterns. The undowered wife shows deference when she needs to manage the husband. The unwed mother manifests

absolute dependence on the miscreant citizen male, modulating into insistence on her rights as a respectable mother and eventual wife. Where women have little power, or where are dependent on a more powerful male, they practice each of Adams's female markers. Where they feel free to speak at will, so they do.

But can we learn more from this study? To do so, we must understand these women in terms of what is important to them, as well as in social terms. A closer look reveals another factor that motivates mothers and defines their experiences: the sex of their children. The *uxor dotata* always has a son, and only a son. Her husband has always been cheating on her, or at least trying to, and she is concerned about both his inappropriate behavior and their son's. Thus Cleostrata argues that parents should assist their sons; Artemona is furious at proof that her husband is corrupting their son; Nausistrata lets her son punish her husband for his embezzlement and cheating. Some of the wealthy wife's power seems, then, to be based in her maternity, in her having produced a son.

The undowered wife frequently has a daughter rather than a son, and when she has both, she has some power relative to her son, but none where her daughter is concerned (Sostrata in *Self-Tormentor*). Sostrata in *Hecyra* has a son, but her overwhelming concern for her apparently unhappy daughter-in-law, Philumena, causes her to act like the mother of a daughter. She manifests reliance on her son when he returns from a business trip but barely speaks up for herself with her abusive husband. Myrrhina, Philumena's actual mother, puts herself in harm's way, relative to her angry husband, while she is urgently protecting Philumena. Sostrata of *Adelphoe* is ready to go to court on her daughter's behalf. Phanostrata of *Cistellaria* is staged only in the process desperately searching for her long-lost daughter.

Hence we may conclude that the sex and status of her child determine the mother's condition and allow us to understand her on her own terms. Where the son is put at risk of unhappiness (*Casina*) or corruption (*Asin.*) by his father's misbehavior, the mother—always an *uxor dotata*—will step in to control the father, whether or not she intends to abet her son's erotic plans. The mother concerned about a son will try to help him (*Heaut.* and *Hec.*), as she has some recourse for action. The mother worried about a daughter at risk, however, has none. She is almost equally at risk, and her vulnerability is evident in her behavior toward the man who can determine the girl's status. She is frequently subservient (Sostrata of *Hec.*) and ready to suffer abuse from her husband (Sostrata of both *Hec.* and *Heaut.*). She may have to manipulate him with care (Philippa of *Epid.*). She always manifests tremendous anxiety and vulnerability (all these women, as well as Phanostrata of *Cist.*). There are exceptions to every other rule in this genre but this: mothers take their marriages very seriously (far more than do their husbands),

and their children are their highest priority. From the physical safety of those adult children, to their emotional well-being, to their moral state, these mothers are completely involved in their children's lives, and they put themselves at significant risk and suffer considerable unpleasantness from men for the sake of those children.³⁴ It is hardly surprising that mothers should be interested in their children's welfare, but it has gone oddly unremarked in scholarship.

A corollary is evident: the physical and sexual vulnerability of the citizen daughter, in a society where her only safe option is marriage, is a matter of extreme anxiety for her mother.³⁵ Fathers, too, suffer this distress, as witness the desire of Periphanes in *Epidicus* and Chremes in both *Self-Tormentor* and *Phormio* to do right by the daughters they sired outside marriage. They feel strong ethical urges, not to mention some guilt. Callicles of *Truculentus* is ready to take the rapist of his daughter to court, despite the risk of scandal. But these fathers do not suffer as the mothers do: anxiety and vulnerability are the defining characteristic of these mothers, and their overwhelming need to help and protect their daughters drives their every speech and action. It is the only thing they care about.

And we should pay attention to what these mothers care about. If we see them only from the perspective of their husbands or in terms of formal speech markers, we do the entire genre a disservice by failing to recognize the urgency of this situation, which recurs almost obsessively: the need that occupies every citizen family to see its daughters safely married. Madeleine Henry has shown how the basic plot of Menandrian comedy may be seen as showing the good works of the courtesan, who helps to reunite a fractured family. This view counterbalances what Henry diagnoses as an "androcentric bias" that overlooks "the actions and dramatic importance of the female characters" (1986, 142). The basic plot of Roman comedy is usually described as focused on the love interests of an *adulescens*, and its generic imperative is understood as procreative citizen marriage, sought and achieved as part of the young man's love plot.³⁶ But if we listen to citizen mothers, we could equally describe comedy as acutely aware of the risks to citizen girls and as seeking, often against absurdly unrealistic obstacles, to assure their safe marriage, ideally to young men who value them.³⁷

The proper upbringing of sons is an equally important concern, but it does not engender the kind of terror found in the comic mothers who are desperate on their daughters' behalf, a terror well dubbed "daughter anxiety."³⁸ We cannot know how frequently, in antiquity, women found themselves worried in this way, and fathers plotted to protect illegitimate daughters, but we can see that this theatrical genre recognizes the physical and sexual vulnerability of the citizen daughter as a problem not merely of respectability but of family stability, of family love, and ultimately of happiness as well.³⁹ The speech of comic mothers gives us a view into

the emotional workings of the middle-class Roman family, where, perhaps equally with the elite family—as argued by Judith Hallett (1984)—the daughter occupies a central position, one that can hardly even be articulated, such is the anxiety generated by her structural vulnerability.

Social class and status are the primary determining factors in a woman's life, but as Roman comedy shows, a citizen woman's conscious experience of her life is chiefly affected by the specific situations of her children, and those situations vary depending upon whether she has a son or a daughter. The mother who is worried about her daughter converts from anxious, deferential female speech to assertive and direct speech, where she has any power, but her overwhelming concern for her daughter makes her vulnerable. As Dutsch aptly remarks, "to imitate a voice, it stands to reason that one must first listen to that voice" (2008, 230). Plautus and Terence (and, I would argue, Menander before them) seem to have heard very clearly how women modulated and adapted their speech in taking action for their children.

The citizen daughter's vulnerability is repeatedly staged as contagious, and her mother is the person most likely to catch, and suffer, the flu. New Comedy does not imagine alternate social values and structures that might eliminate the burden of respectable female sexuality—a burden lifted only relatively recently even in North America.⁴⁰ What it does is stage the citizen daughter at risk so repeatedly and insistently that we might designate her a permanently, structurally endangered species in the social organization of the citizen classes of antiquity. Even a relatively formal element, such as patterns of maternal speech, shows us this constant crisis at the heart of family life in the ancient world.

NOTES

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1. See, for a start, the groundbreaking article of Adams (1984). The scholarship on gender and speech in antiquity is enormous: Fögen 2004 provides a bibliography, to which may be added, for women's speech in Latin, Dutsch 2008; James 2005; 2010. McClure 1999 studies the speech of women in Attic tragedy.

2. Adams cites Donatus *ad Phormio* 1005: *feminarum oratio, etsi non blanditur, blanda est* (1984, 71). Dutsch (2008, 22n66) points out that Donatus is aware that some female blandishments arise from anxiety.

3. A stage monologue is still a stylized representation of speech, whether male or female, and the male playwrights would have had little opportunity to hear women speaking among themselves, unless they were eavesdroppers. But the conventions performed in this genre demonstrate consciousness by the authors that women use female conversational markers and styles in public, when they need to speak appropriately for their gender.

4. See Dutsch (2008) for a careful parsing and review of the words that Adams discusses.

5. Such a statement may seem tautological, as those markers are conversational rather than monologistic, but it bears repeating that women's speech in monologue is virtually identical to male speech.

6. The same is true for men, especially in New Comedy.

7. Packman (1999) reminds us that such terms as *uxor dotata* and *matrona* do not appear in the mss., which tend to provide minimal designations, such as *mulier* (often abbreviated m.). She rightly suggests that such terminology presents these female characters in relation to their husbands rather than as independent characters. I use the term *uxor dotata* here because there is a distinct difference in speech and behavior between the independently wealthy mother and the mother without resources, but I remain mindful of Packman's point. A detailed study of the different classes of mothers (in a larger forthcoming project) will reveal further distinctions among the women of each class, who are indeed attempting, as Packman (1999, 257) points out, to support their own "interests and goals . . . typically under very trying conditions."

8. This woman receives hostile treatment by her husband, and critics have generally followed suit; see, among others, Schuhmann 1977. Krauss (2004) has demonstrated conclusively that the Plautine *uxor dotata* is an agent for audience laughter and is a sympathetic character.

9. In Roman comedy, such a mother has only a daughter. In Menander, these women may have a son or a son and a daughter out of wedlock (*Heros*, *Georgos*, *Hiereia*), but Roman comedy never presents an adult son engendered by rape or nonmarital consensual sex (hence the "second wife" of Chremes in *Phormio* produces not a son but a daughter). By contrast, the child born out of wedlock in the drama's present time is always a baby boy, never a girl.

10. Oddly, Sostrata of Terence's *Hecyra* fits into this group: she has no domestic power, and her concern for her runaway daughter-in-law, Philumena, whom she has treated as her own (278–79), aligns her with the mothers who suffer emotionally and worry about their daughters.

11. Childless wives (Alcumena in *Amphitruo*, Matrona in *Menaechmi*, Panegyris and her nameless sister in *Stichus*) look out for themselves and their rights and resist male authority when they feel on firm ground morally, but they are less assertive than the wives who are also mothers, especially mothers of sons. They are more assertive, however, than the anxious mothers of daughters at risk.

12. Rei (1998) interprets Cleostrata as a wife *in manu*. Though her dowry is never mentioned, I read her as an *uxor dotata*, not *in manu*, chiefly because her husband is so afraid of her. His fear of Cleostrata is typical for the comic husband of a wealthy wife. Even dowered wives could be divorced by their husbands (see the readiness of Menaechmus to dispose of Matrona), so Myrrhina's warning to her is no proof that Cleostrata is *in manu*.

13. With MacCary and Willcock (1976), I use the spelling of Cleostrata's name found in the manuscripts. Except where noted, I use the text of Lindsay (1904).

14. I mark signs of conciliation and intimacy with an underline, and intensifiers with boldface.

15. I read the text of MacCary and Willcock (1976) here.

16. This moment opens up a space for considering the way respectable Roman women thought about their linguistic performance of gender.

17. Dutsch (2008, 32) rightly notes that Cleostrata's "indignant protest draws the audience's attention to the peculiar phenomenon of women speaking against their own interests."

18. When Cleostrata shushes Myrrhina—*st, tace* (212); *vir, eccum it; intro abi, adpropera, age amabo* (213): "My husband—here he comes!—go inside, hurry, **go on, please**)—her modifier *amabo* acts as a sign of urgency rather than politeness or deference, especially combined with the intensifier *age*.

19. Dutsch (2008, 50–53) reviews the usage of *amabo* in Roman comedy and concludes that it is overwhelmingly a female expression and "a marker of intimacy" (53). That Cleostrata uses it in a scene of dispute between herself and Myrrhina means that the two women are very close, as already marked when Myrrhina uses the term in first greeting Cleostrata (173).

20. Lysidamus's frightened response: *Pol ego amico dedi cuidam operam, dum emit unguenta* (241–42).

21. Two of her short speeches are damaged (862–72 and 983–90), but it seems probable that even in these remarks she remains sharp, focused, and in control of both herself and her speech.

22. His sardonic remark at 409, about his wife's exercise of *imperium*, suggests that such indeed is his belief (hardly surprising). On the *blanditia* of wives, see Dutsch (2008, 80–81). Cf. Demaenetus at *Asin.* 87: *dote imperium vendidi* (I sold my authority for a dowry).

23. For neither father nor son would sex with Casina constitute actual incest, as they are not related. The incestuous relationship here would be emotional, as Cleostrata has brought Casina up as a daughter.

24. See, for instance, Dorippa of *Mercator*, Matrona of *Menaechmi*, and Artemona of *Asinaria*. Upon encountering their husbands' infidelity and abuse, these wives express their outrage and prepare to stand up for themselves, either by calling in their fathers (Dorippa and Matrona) or by exercising the power of the dowry (Artemona). Strikingly, both Matrona and Artemona are personally hurt by their husbands' disdain for them. These wives also dispense with deferential and conciliatory speech. Alcumena of *Amphitruo* expresses outrage when her husband accuses her of infidelity: she threatens to divorce him.

25. I take this brief outburst as more typically female, chiefly because it comes in the middle of her emotional conversation with her son, rather than in a challenge to her husband. Here Sostrata is upset because she is trying to comfort her son. In performance, different dynamics could be chosen.

26. Melaenis of *Cistellaria* is a significant exception.

27. The woman who brings up her illegitimate offspring appears in Menander's *Georgos*. Phanostrata of *Cist.* was an unwed citizen mother until Demipho, the elderly rapist, found and married her, before the play's action begins. But she did not bring up her daughter (nor, apparently, did she marry in the meantime). During the play's action, she is a respectable wife hysterically, if somewhat implausibly, seeking that long-lost daughter, so she functions as a citizen wife and mother rather than as an unwed citizen mother.

28. For a different view, see Dutsch (2008, 28–30, 109) on Philippa as an example of possibly excessive feminine self-pity, particularly in the eyes of ancient males. I am inclined to say that if any comic mother deserves to feel sorry for herself, that mother is Philippa. Periphanes's query at 533 ("Who is this terrified foreign woman feeling so sorry for herself?") is asked in ignorance of her identity or circumstances, as Dutsch notes. At this point, the audience knows more about those circumstances than he does and may be inclined to sympathize with her rather than dismiss her. With Willcock (2002), I read Philippa as "human and sympathetic."

29. See Dutsch (2008, 116–17) on how Periphanes takes a positive attitude toward his fatherhood: he "insinuates" that he was helping out not only Telestis and Philippa but even Philippa's mother. This disingenuous, absurd, and self-serving claim is designed to exculpate himself from the guilt that he himself has acknowledged. We find out later that he stayed in contact with Philippa and Telestis, at least through his slave, long enough that Telestis recognizes Epidicus on sight—Periphanes's slave knows his daughter better than does Periphanes himself.

30. This line is the sole citation in the *OLD* for *obsero* as nonagricultural. See *OLD* s.v. *obsero* 2: "to sow, beget (troubles)."

31. Periphanes's intent to marry Philippa and make Telestis legitimate is established in his expositional conversation with Apocides (166–80).

32. Courtesans too alternate between marked female speech and plain talk. Cf. Phronesium of *Truculentus*, who uses a wide range of speech types, depending on immediate circumstances.

33. Men too dip into *blanditiae* and deferential speech as suits their purposes (often in trying to persuade women). There they are adopting the speech of the opposite sex, as a foreign language to them; I am inclined to think that women, too, find their gendered language burdensome.

34. As noted earlier, modern readers may be disturbed that Cleostrata is ready to grant her son sexual access to a girl whom she has raised as a daughter, but we must admit that her husband certainly ought not have such access, and that she favors her son in order to foil the old man. (We should next note that such readiness is a dramatic necessity and may represent an unarticulated acceptance that sexual exploitation by the master is the

lot of slaves.) Cleostrata consistently demonstrates concern with social, sexual, and moral propriety—of no interest to her husband—and that she believes parents should help their children (262–63).

35. Dutsch (2008, 112–18) discusses the way comedy may be read as representing mothers as overidentifying with their children. My approach focuses on the very conscious concerns of the mothers, from anxiety to agitation to near-hysterical desperation, especially when the respectability of their daughters is at stake.

36. That Plautus's comedies often virtually seek to avoid this structure does not affect its status as the engine of the genre overall. On the need for procreative citizen marriage as the engine of Menandrian comedy, see Lape (2004).

37. Hence Phanostrata's nearly hysterical search for her daughter, in *Cistellaria*, may be implausible even for this implausible genre, but it accords absolutely with the genre's social values.

38. I owe this brilliant term to Serena Witzke, who coined it upon reading an earlier version of this chapter. I am glad both to steal it from her and to acknowledge the theft.

39. The daughter's happiness is an expressed concern for Philumena's parents in *Hecyra*, for Chremes in *Andria*, for the daughter of Charmides in *Trinummus*.

40. I adapt here the term of Rousselle (1992, 324), "the burden of sexuality."

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The Many Shapes of Sisterhood in Roman Comedy

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Roman comedy is a study in relationships, but the ones that have been most studied are those between men, for example, father and son, or master and slave. Women's relationships, when they are examined, have captured the most scholarly attention when the relationship is between a woman and a man: prostitute and her lover, daughter and father, or wife and husband. Of the many and intriguing relationships showcased in Roman comedy, those between women remain the least studied, an oversight that scholars have been working diligently to correct in recent years.¹ This chapter examines the relationships between sisters and foster sisters: I show how, in a culture in which women's bodies are controlled by men, sisters work together to protect themselves and each other from the control of their fathers, husbands, and clients. In each instance, the women's power is limited: sisters may wrest control from their father, for example, only to deliver it to their husbands. The women exercise their limited power by choosing the most attractive of the few available options, and often they must entrust their bodies to one man in order to protect themselves from another. In fact, their ability to persuade other men to help their cause is one of their only weapons.

This chapter considers the relationships of four pairs of sisters and foster sisters in Plautus and Terence: two *meretrices* in Plautus's *Bacchides*; two newly married women in Plautus's *Stichus*; the *meretrix* Thais and Pamphila, who was kidnapped as a young child and subsequently raised as Thais's younger sister in Terence's *Eunuch*; and a similar pair of foster sisters in Terence's *Andria*, the *meretrix* Chrysis and the lost girl originally of citizen status, Glycerium. At the

start of each play, one or both of the sisters is in a position where a man controls where she lives, what sort of protection she has, and who has sexual access to her. In *Stichus* and *Bacchides*, the two sisters in each pair are of equal social station and suffer the same kinds of constraints. There is an observable power differential whereby one acts as leader and the other follower, but they weather minor disagreements and are able to achieve their ends by cooperation. In Terence's *Eunuch* and *Andria*, we see little to none of the citizen sister (the younger of each pair), who had been separated from her birth family at a young age, because of comic conventions that rarely allow staging of an unmarried citizen girl.² Because one of the sisters rarely appears on stage, it would defy convention to show the two sisters in conversation; for this reason, we do not see these pairs of women working together toward a common goal as we do in *Bacchides* and *Stichus*. We do, however, see how the older sister, the *meretrix* of each pair, works through available channels—usually the citizen men whom she deems most useful for her cause—to protect her younger sister, the citizen foundling.

Plautus's *Stichus*: Cooperation between Citizen Women

Stichus follows the plight of two sisters, Panegyris and Pamphila,³ whose husbands have been absent without communication for three years. Their father, Antipho, believes it is in his daughters' best interest to remarry, a proposition that Pamphila strongly opposes but Panegyris is considering. The two opening scenes of this play offer a glimpse into the lives of sisters who engage in a minor sibling quarrel but ultimately have a harmonious relationship. Carol Poster neatly sums up why these two women have captured so much scholarly attention: "The play opens with a dialogue between Panegyris and her sister, two young married women who are both intelligent, witty, decent, and loyal to their husbands. They are not autocratic matrons, silly girls, or grasping prostitutes; instead, they are as charming a pair of heroines as might be found in any author."⁴ The women are of equal social status, and the circumstances of the play put them in the same situation regarding their marriages and the pressure to divorce. They do not, however, react the same way. The debate between sisters allows us to see how two women respond to the social constraints placed on citizen women regarding marriage. Furthermore, it allows us to see how sisters in a similar predicament are able to rely on each other for valuable emotional support.

The play is based on the lost *Adelphoi/Philadelphoi* by Menander (so named because the sisters are married to two brothers), and the first two scenes of *Stichus*, in which the sisters discuss their father's wish for them to remarry, appear to derive

their concept and structure from the Menandrian original.⁵ Greek tragedy offers precedents for the literary trope of debate between sisters, and the trope gains popularity in Hellenistic literature.⁶ The inherited trope sets up an expectation that the sister who speaks first will be the dominate personality and present the most compelling argument, as with Sophocles's characters Antigone and Electra.⁷ Helene Foley argues that the contrasting voice of Ismene in the *Antigone* shows that Antigone's morality, although informed by her gendered status, is not representative of her gender.⁸ Several Plautine plays meet the audience's expectations for the trope, including the *Rudens*, in which Palaestra dominates Ampelisca, and *Poenulus*, in which Adelphasium dominates Anterastilis. William Arnott argues that in *Stichus*, Plautus has turned the known trope on its head, likely following the innovation of his Menandrian model: the younger sister, Panegyris, speaks second and appears not to have even been given a name by the playwright, but quickly emerges as the dominant figure.⁹

In accordance with both Roman and classical Athenian tradition, the sisters have accepted marriages arranged for them by their father. Under Greek law, a woman was under the protection of a *kyrios*, usually her father, who was responsible for representing her in all legal contracts, including those regarding marriage.¹⁰ This situation might be understood by the Roman audience in terms of the institution of the *paterfamilias*: free Roman children of legitimate marriages fell under the *potestas* of their father or his oldest male ascendant, the *paterfamilias*,¹¹ and it was customary for the *paterfamilias* to join his child (male or female) in marriage to a family that brought social advantage for himself.¹² He need not take his son's or daughter's wishes into account, and in fact the bride and groom may never have met before the betrothal. In this way, the *paterfamilias* had considerable control over all his descendants, not just his daughters, although a son would hope to become a *paterfamilias* himself one day.

In *Stichus*, Antipho's power extends not just to the arrangement of marriage but also to its termination: it is clear from the text that he remains responsible for his daughters' well-being and has the right to dissolve their marriages. Under Roman law divorce could be initiated only by the woman's father if she was married *sine manu*, that is, if she took steps to retain her father as *paterfamilias* rather than pass into the *manus* (literally "hand") of her husband. A woman who did pass into the *manus* of her husband came into the legal guardianship of his family, and only her husband (or his *paterfamilias*) was able to initiate divorce.¹³ For women married *sine manu*, it was not until the time of Antoninus Pius or Marcus Aurelius that Roman law expressly forbade the father to terminate his daughter's otherwise happy marriage for arbitrary reasons.¹⁴ Antipho in *Stichus* feels that his reasons are not arbitrary: his sons-in-law had departed three years before the start of the play

to try their luck as sea merchants and have not been heard from. Pamphila and Panegyris are having difficulty supporting themselves without any income (at 249–54, Panegyris summons her husband's old parasite to ask for a loan of wheat), which leads Antipho to conclude that the husbands have either abandoned his daughters or have died. For this reason, Antipho decides to find them new husbands, effectively dissolving the first marriages. He believes he is acting in his daughters' best interest: as their father, it is his moral and legal duty to entrust his daughters to good care. They are currently starving; therefore, it is his duty to arrange for more suitable providers. Antipho decides to whom his daughters are entrusted in matrimony and judges whether they are adequately cared for; in the event that they are not, it is his responsibility to arrange for a new custodian. The sisters' wishes are subordinate.

When the sisters discuss their situation in the opening scene, a minor disagreement about how to deal with it creates tension in the relationship. Panegyris compares herself and her sister to Penelope, since they suffer the long absence of their husbands and feel the pressure of maintaining a household alone (lines 1–6). Pamphila, however, feels that it is inappropriate to complain about their husbands, telling her sister that, like Penelope, it is their duty (*officium*, line 7) to endure their husbands' absences.¹⁵ While Pamphila does not express the same resentment toward their husbands, she does express disapproval at their father's actions, arguing that he is executing his duty (*officium*, 14) in an immoral way (*improbis*, 14).¹⁶ Both women are notably upset by what each feels is a serious issue, but neither receives validation from the other. Panegyris wants confirmation that it is acceptable to resent her husband's absence, and Pamphila wants confirmation that their father is unjustified.

The two women do not remain in disagreement for long, partly because Pamphila actively works to bring the two to a mutual understanding. While they are in disagreement, they cannot successfully oppose their father. They must settle their minor differences if they hope to exercise any control over their situation. Pamphila offers empathy, echoing Panegyris's lament that the men have been away two years (30); she is clearly suffering, too, and she understands her sister's point of view. Pamphila infers that Panegyris's loyalty is wavering because she believes her husband's failure to communicate is a dereliction of duty (34–36):

PAM. an id doles, soror, quia illi suom officium
non colunt, quom tu tuom facis? PAN. ita pol.

PAM. Is this why you are upset, sister? Because they do not do their duty,
but you do yours?

PAN. Yes! That's exactly it.

Now Panegyris is getting somewhere: she understands that her sister's resistance comes from resentment, and this discovery allows her to craft a targeted argument. Pamphila explains that one's sense of duty is absolute: it is not conditional upon someone else's fulfilling his duty (39–46). It is particularly important to Pamphila that the two women take the same position on their absent husbands, and she puts significant intellectual effort into swaying her sister to her point of view. Pamphila has started this conversation by mentioning an adversary, their father (12); her strategy for opposing him requires that the two women present a united front. Her argument about duty successfully removes Panegyris's objections, who says, *placet. taceo* ("You make a good argument. I drop my objections," 47). The sisters leave the stage with one mind, and from this point forward they work against their father in complete cooperation.

Even when they work in concert, the two sisters have limited power in opposing their father. Panegyris devises a strategy that depends on indirect methods of flattery and persuasion (70–71):¹⁷

exorando, haud advorsando sumendam operam censeo:
gratiam per si petimus, spero ab eo impetrassere;

I think the deed must be accomplished by supplication, not opposition:
if we ask for a favor, I hope he will grant it.

Together they distract and soften their father with kisses and caresses (88–101). In order to take control of their fates from their father, the sisters need to convince him that maintaining their current marriages is his own idea. When Antipho proposes that they take new husbands, the sisters defend their position with moral and logical arguments: either their father did not think the husbands were a good match in the first place, in which case he never should have given his daughters to them, or he did think the husbands were a good match, in which case it is unfair (*non aequomst*, 131) to separate the women from them. Panegyris refutes the charge that the women are disobeying their father's orders (*imperium patris*, 141) by stating that they are obeying the order he gave several years ago, when he gave them in marriage to the brothers (142). Because their father has legal and culturally prescribed control over them, the only way for them to exercise power is indirectly, by convincing him to make the choice for them that they would make for themselves.

Stichus treats a variation of a literary topos, called "the resisting daughter" by modern scholars, in which a father pressures his daughter (usually just one daughter) to divorce but she refuses. The resisting daughter scene of *Stichus* is similar to *P. Didot* I, a papyrus of forty-four lines from the mid-second century

BCE, which many scholars believe is an excerpt from a Menandrian play, perhaps the very play on which *Stichus* is based:¹⁸

γέγονεν ἐκεῖνος εἰς ἔμ' οἶον ἡξίουν,
 ἐμοὶ τ' ἀρέσκει πάνθ' ἃ κακείνῳι, πάτερ.
 ἀλλ' ἔστ' ἐμοὶ μὲν χρηστός, ἡπόρηκε δέ·
 σὺ δ' ἀνδρὶ μ', ὥς φής, ἐκδίδως νῦν πλουσίῳι 20
 ἵνα μὴ καταζῶ τὸν βίον λυπουμενῇ.
 καὶ ποῦ τοσαῦτα χρήματ' ἐστίν, ὦ πάτερ,
 ἃ μάλλον ἀνδρὸς εὐφρανεῖ παρόντα με;
 ἢ πῶς δίκαιόν ἐστιν ἢ καλῶς ἔχον
 τῶν μὲν ἀγαθῶν με τὸ μέρος ὧν εἶχεν λαβεῖν, 25
 τοῦ συνπορηθῆναι δὲ μὴ λαβεῖν μέρος;¹⁹

He is for me all that I wished for, and it pleases me to be everything to him. But [you say] he is good for me, but poor: now you give me to a wealthy man, as you say, so that I will not live my life in distress. And where is this great wealth, father, which, once I have it, will make me happier than my husband will? How is it either just or good for me to take a share of the good things, when he had them, but that I not take a share of the poverty?

Ariana Traill offers a thorough and thoughtful analysis of this trope, which appears in five surviving pieces of Greek and Latin literature (Menander's *Epitrepontes*, P. Didot I, Plautus's *Stichus*, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, and Seneca's *Controversiae*).²⁰ In each instance, the father has legal authority, which means that the daughter must argue her case using moral and practical arguments.²¹ The trope offers the playwright a chance to explore a moral conflict: a stable society depends on the sanctity of the authority of the *paterfamilias*, but also on a woman's loyalty to her spouse. The audience will therefore experience tension: they want to see the father's authority accepted and respected, but they also laud a woman who is faithful to her husband even in hard times. In this situation, two men have claims on each woman, and Pamphila and Panegyris exercise their limited power by choosing which of the two men will gain or retain control.

Gianna Petrone connects Pamphila's moral message in *Stichus* with the historical circumstances of the play, which was produced in 200 BCE to celebrate Scipio's return from Africa: the sisters in *Stichus* should be faithful to their absent husbands just as Roman wives should be faithful to the absent soldiers.²² By modifying the resisting-daughter theme to include two daughters in *Stichus* rather

than one, Plautus is able to explore reasons why a daughter might secretly *want* to concede the divorce, even as she outwardly opposes her father's suggestion to dissolve a marriage. The speaker of the *Didot* papyrus, by contrast, appears to have always held a clear, unwavering position on the subject. Rather than presenting one ideal heroine as a model for Roman womanly virtue, *Stichus* presents two rather more human characters. Panegyris expresses a realistic anxiety about having been abandoned, as well as resentment about the double standard for spousal fidelity: Panegyris is expected (by her sister, Pamphila) to remain a loyal wife to her long-absent husband, even though he has not fulfilled his husbandly duty of providing for her.

To see this scene as a simple philosophical debate about a father's authority over his daughters misses the second, less conventional debate about the unfairness of a woman's lot: the sisters express frustration that these three men control where they live and whether they have enough food to eat. Of the two kinds of men (husbands and fathers) who have authority over them, neither is doing a good job. If Petrone is correct that Pamphila's speech on *officium* is a message to contemporary Roman women to remain loyal to their absent husbands in wartime, then Panegyris's hesitation adds a note of subversion, because she makes a good case justifying women's resentment. When scholars present the sisters as having one mind from the start, attaching the sentiments of Pamphila to both sisters,²³ they miss this subversive element. The opening of *Stichus* is not only a philosophical debate about duty but also an exploration of the complexity of the women's sentiments: they work hard to be good sisters and help each other arrive at an acceptable strategy for bettering their lives.

Plautus's *Bacchides*: How Much Control Does a Prostitute Have over Her Own Body?

The rather fragmentary opening of this play introduces two sisters, both prostitutes named Bacchis.²⁴ The play is based on the *Dis Exapaton* by Menander, but unfortunately the play survives only in fragments, in which the sisters are mentioned a few times but do not speak.²⁵ Madeleine Henry believes that Menander would have presented the two prostitutes in a sympathetic light, perhaps by showing that their relationship as sisters transcended their social status.²⁶ As free women, they are not the property of a master (as in the case of enslaved prostitutes), but they are forced by financial necessity to sell their bodies to client after client. Greek and Roman prostitutes of free status might be freedwomen, who had often served as prostitutes before their manumission and for whom this is the most viable source

of income once they are free; or foreigners or citizens who have been forced into the trade by poverty and an economy that provides few job opportunities for women.²⁷ Many New Comedies feature prostitutes, as in *Bacchides*, because their noncitizen status makes them uniquely suited to be the object of romantic love, a theme common to the genre. Because it is improper for unmarried citizen women to socialize with men outside their immediate families, there are no opportunities for young citizen men to establish romantic relationships with them. A free prostitute, like the women in *Bacchides*, runs a business out of her home and is subject to the constraints of any self-employed individual: she can turn down customers and bar the gates to outsiders, but ultimately she must accept enough clients to make a living.²⁸ Their use of detailed contracts, as in Plautus's *Asinaria* (751–808), reflects a desire to maintain power and avoid the appearance of slavishness: a contract indicates that both parties have control in the relationship, and both are free to leave, with penalties.²⁹

In reality, however, a prostitute might not be in a financial position to turn down or extract herself from a contract, as is the case with Bacchis of Ephesus in this play. Bacchis of Ephesus (here called Soror) was involved with Mnesilochus while she resided in Ephesus; Mnesilochus now sends his friend, Pistoclerus, to Athens in search of her. She has arrived in Athens in the company of the soldier Cleomachus, who has paid for a year of exclusive access to her. Financial need had driven her to put herself in the possession of this soldier, who gained not only sexual access to her but also the power to uproot and relocate her. Fortuitously—for this is New Comedy—he has brought her to Athens, where her sister (here called Bacchis) happens to live. At this point the sisters conspire to liberate Soror, who fears that Cleomachus will soon leave Athens, forcing her to accompany him. Later that day, in fact, Cleomachus sends Soror a message explaining that she must either repay him or prepare to depart with him for Elatia (590–91). Because of the terms of the contract, she cannot end her relationship with Cleomachus unless she can pay back the money that he gave her. The contract is for only one year, but Soror may never again have such an opportunity to live in the same town as her sister: when the contract ends, and with it the financial support of Cleomachus, she may find herself far from Athens and without the protection of a male client or the means to pay her way back to Athens. The current situation, then, offers her the best chance to live with her sister, enjoying the emotional and practical benefits of the arrangement. The sisters seize upon this opportunity to remain together, to have control over where they live and with whom they interact: they work together to buy control of Soror's body back from the soldier. The opening scene informs the audience that sisterly affection is a strong motive in

their actions, and the spectator is aware that the story will follow Bacchis's endeavors to free her sister so that they can remain together in Athens.

As in *Stichus*, the sisters of *Bacchides* require the assistance of men in order to achieve their aims. Unlike men, Bacchis and Soror have only one way to earn a sizable sum of money: by extracting it from clients. Bacchis concocts a scheme to get the money from Mnesilochus, the young man who had fallen in love with Soror back when she lived in Ephesus. Since Bacchis does not have direct access to Mnesilochus, she works through his friend, Pistoclerus, who, coincidentally, has been pursuing Bacchis. While endeavoring to get the money from Mnesilochus, Bacchis simultaneously seduces Pistoclerus in order to win his financial support; in order to provide for themselves, the sisters need money beyond the amount that it will take to buy Soror's freedom.

Like the citizen sisters of *Stichus*, Bacchis enlists the help of men through indirect means of persuasion—in this case, flattery and deceit. The conversation that ensues between Bacchis and Pistoclerus is a subtle dance in which she secures his involvement by misleading him about his role. Bacchis presents herself to Pistoclerus as a third party with no financial motives, convincing Pistoclerus that he will be doing her a favor, which will leave *her* indebted to *him*, a debt that she insinuates she will pay with her physical affection. When she presents her situation to Pistoclerus, she emphasizes her desperation and her powerlessness, intending to make Pistoclerus feel powerful—for he will realize that he can play the role of savior. She says (42–44):

haec ita me orat sibi qui caveat aliquem ut hominem reperiam,
ut istunc militem—ut, ubi emeritum sibi sit, se revehat domum.
id, amabo te, huic caveas.

[My sister] is begging me to find someone to look out for her interests with regard to this soldier of ours, so that, when she has served her time, he will return her to our house. Be a dear, help her in this.

Bacchis does not at first suggest that she wants any money from Pistoclerus but begins with the seemingly innocuous suggestion that he come to their house while she explains the problem (47–48). The dramatic space of the stage is the street in front of two houses, both represented by doors in the *skene*, and one of these houses belongs to Bacchis.³⁰ Pistoclerus is literally at her door when she makes this suggestion: it is easy to bait him when he is all but in the trap. Bacchis suggests that he sit down and wait for the soldier and promises kisses (*savium*, 49) in return,

but Pistoclerus is suspicious because he understands that *meretrices* do not give kisses for free. He calls her offers *blanditia* (50), the well-recognized means of manipulation used by courtesans on libidinous men.³¹ To alleviate his suspicions, Bacchis lays out her full plan for him: he needs to stick around only until the soldier arrives, because his mere presence, she claims, will prevent the soldier from harming the women or carrying off Soror (57–62). She plans to use one man, Pistoclerus, to shield her sister from another.

The conversation turns to the money from which Pistoclerus will soon be parted, which is Bacchis's true goal. Although she has told Pistoclerus that he can protect Soror by his mere presence, in reality the only way he can protect her is with his money. Moreover, it is not Soror alone who needs money: after the sisters have purchased Soror's freedom, both will still need steady income for food, clothing, and shelter. Bacchis's initial strategy has removed suspicion from herself long enough to lure Pistoclerus into her house and onto her *lectus*. Once Pistoclerus agrees to pose as her lover to help protect Soror (92), Bacchis masterfully secures the first payment: she announces that she will host a dinner and asks Pistoclerus to attend, posing as her lover (93–96). Allowing Bacchis to pay insults his sense of decency, so he insists on covering the cost of the dinner himself (97–98). Bacchis has secured the first financial reward for both herself and her sister, who will also be attending the lavish dinner.³² In a private conversation, Soror praises Bacchis for having "caught" Pistoclerus (102), that is, for having secured an ongoing relationship in which he will continue to pay for her services.

Unlike the sisters of *Stichus*, who share a single predicament, Soror is in a more difficult position than Bacchis and has both more to gain and more to lose from their cooperation. Soror's only concern for the moment is extracting her purchase price from Mnesilochus; although Bacchis wants to help Soror, she is quite naturally thinking of her own financial needs at the same time. After the sisters make their pact, Bacchis appears to put aside her promise to help Soror while she concentrates on seducing her own lover, Pistoclerus. While she interacts with him in lines 40–101, Soror's needs take a back seat. Although seducing Pistoclerus is part of the plan—the sisters have agreed to work through him to get to Soror's lover, Mnesilochus—Bacchis is trying to get payment from Pistoclerus for herself. This part of the scene reads like many stock scenes of New Comedy in which the "greedy prostitute" callously exploits a young man's feelings for personal gain,³³ as Phronesium does in Plautus's *Truculentus*. However, Bacchis's two goals are not in conflict: there is no reason not to take advantage of Pistoclerus's willingness to give money. Lest she appear to be neglecting her sister, however, Bacchis quickly turns the conversation back to Soror's problem (103–6):

BA. tibi nunc operam dabo de Mnesilochos, soror,
ut hic accipias potius aurum quam hinc eas cum milite.
SO. cupio. BA. dabitur opera. aqua calet: eamus hinc intro ut laves.
nam uti navi vecta es, credo timida es.

BA. Now I will focus my efforts on Mnesilochus, sister, so that you can
bring in some money rather than go off with the soldier.

SO. This is what I desire.

BA. I'll work on it. The water is warm: let us go inside so that you can
bathe. For after your journey by sea, you must be tired.

The seduction of Pistoclerus has thus far benefited Bacchis more than Soror, but now we see that Bacchis has masterfully been attending to both long-term and short-term goals simultaneously: by making Pistoclerus thoroughly enamored of her, she has ensured future income for herself and gained access to Mnesilochus. Now she can move to step two: getting the money for Soror from Mnesilochus. Bacchis is the dominant personality, taking charge of the situation as an elder sister might. She is also in a position of greater power than Soror, who is locked into an undesirable contract. In order to reassure her sister, it is therefore important that Bacchis acknowledge, with *operam dabo* and *dabitur opera*, that she is still working on Soror's problem. The statements show her concern for her sister's emotional well-being and her desire to comfort her. The two are well suited for each other: Bacchis has a take-charge attitude, and Soror needs someone to look after her. The relationship helps both women meet their financial and emotional needs so that they can stay together in Athens.

Their plan succeeds: the women receive enough money from Mnesilochus and Pistoclerus to buy Soror's way out of her contract with Cleomachus, but they have effectively sold themselves to Pistoclerus and Mnesilochus instead. The terms of this sale, however, are more agreeable to Bacchis and Soror: they accept Pistoclerus and Mnesilochus as lovers on a purely short-term basis—one payment in exchange for one evening or one favor. What is more, they get to stay together: Soror can now choose where she lives and to whom she sells herself. They are still limited by the social system that offers foreign women few ways other than prostitution to support themselves. Bacchis, however, has changed the rules of the trade by engaging in a new kind of contract with Pistoclerus: instead of Pistoclerus's offer of money in exchange for physical contact, Bacchis initiates physical contact (with *suavia* and caresses) and asks for money in return. She manipulates him into doing what she wants and needs him to do—for her sake and for her sister's—just as the sisters of *Stichus* manipulated their father.

Foster Sisters in Terence's *Eunuch* and *Andria*

In the two plays of Plautus discussed above, the sisters are of equal social station, and their similar situations make them likely allies. The citizen women of *Stichus* suffer equally because of their husbands' absence, and although one of the Bacchides has a more immediate problem than the other, they have a common goal: to live and work together in Athens. By contrast, in *Andria* and *Eunuch*, the women are not sisters by birth but rather foster sisters, of different statuses, and in very different situations. In each case, the younger girl (Pamphila of *Eunuch* and Glycerium of *Andria*) was separated from her citizen family at an early age and raised as a sister to the elder (Thais in *Eunuch* and Chrysis in *Andria*). Thais and Chrysis, both prostitutes, look out for their younger sisters in the same way that the sisters of *Bacchides* and *Stichus* looked out for each other. In the case of *Eunuch* and *Andria*, however, what is best for one sister is not necessarily what is best for the other: the elder would benefit from a second income brought in by another prostitute, but the younger would best achieve financial security by marrying a citizen man, provided that her citizen status can be recognized. This situation creates competing interests for the elder sister, as seen especially in *Eunuch*.

As prostitutes, Thais and Chrysis suffer the same limitations as the two Bacchides: they must sell their bodies to paying customers to earn a living. They have some freedom to turn down unappealing lovers, but only if they can still take in sufficient income. Chrysis has a small role in *Andria* because she dies before the start of the play; we learn from other characters that she was a free prostitute operating a business out of her own home, where Glycerium also lived but did not entertain multiple lovers. Thais in *Eunuch* is a more prominent character and provides useful insight into how a free prostitute operated as head of her own household. She juggles two lovers in the play: Phaedria, who is poor but for whom she has genuine affection, and Thraso, who is less attractive but rich. Thais sells her services to Thraso in order to continue her relationship with Phaedria, who does not bring in as much money (the juggling of a rich and a poor lover is a common trope in New Comedy and Latin elegy).³⁴ Glycerium and Pamphila both live in households supported by prostitutes and might reasonably be expected to enter the trade.

Where paternity is a condition of citizen status, as is the case in New Comedy, protection of a citizen woman's body from rape is crucial to the stability of the family and therefore the state. As such, a playwright creates suspense by putting a citizen woman in a position where her body might be violated. The audience knows that Glycerium and Pamphila are citizens, but their status has not been officially recognized, and most of the other characters believe them to be foreigners

(and a slave, in the case of Pamphila). With a focus on romantic love, New Comic plots often showcase the attempts of a young citizen man to marry the object of his desire. Both Glycerium and Pamphila will be eligible for marriage only if their citizen status is recognized, and each is an undesirable wife if she has had sex with another man out of wedlock, even if she was raped. The audience sympathizes with both Glycerium and Pamphila because they know that they are citizens, and they cheer for the characters who work to protect these young women, including their elder sisters, Chrysis and Thais.

Glycerium has had an exclusive relationship with her first lover, but his father now threatens to pry him away from Glycerium. If she is unable to marry him, no other citizen man will accept her as his wife. In fact, because of her ineligibility for marriage, her citizen family will almost certainly not recognize her status. There are a handful of trades open to foreign women, but in New Comedy, the audience understands that a woman in Glycerium's position, if she is not recognized as a citizen, will turn to the trade she knows best: prostitution. Her position is summed up by her lover, Pamphilus, who balks at the suggestion that he will abandon her (*And.* 274–76):

bene et pudice eius doctum atque eductum sinam
coactum egestate ingenium inmutarier?
non faciam.³⁵

When she has been raised and educated properly and chastely, would I allow her character to be corrupted by destitution? I will not.

Such language (*bene et pudice doctum*) is a signal to the audience that Glycerium has the character of a citizen, and that therefore her citizen status will be recognized before the end of the play. By New Comic convention, a woman's character goes hand in hand with her birth status: foundlings—even those who do not know that they are citizens by birth—are portrayed with the chastity and modesty appropriate to a citizen. The foundling shuns the trade of prostitution, perhaps even expressing embarrassment at the very word (see, e.g., Selenium at *Cistellaria* 82), and develops deep affection for her first and only lover. Pamphilus is afraid that poverty will force Glycerium into prostitution, thus “corrupting her character” (*ingenium inmutarier*). His statement draws attention to her true status and the need to protect her.

Pamphila's position is quite different: while Glycerium is in danger because of poverty, Pamphila is in danger because she is a slave. She was raised by a prostitute and, upon her foster mother's death, sold into slavery. She has been purchased by

Thraso, who does not know that Pamphila was raised as Thais's sister (such coincidences are part of the genre) nor that her birth parents are Athenian citizens—something that Thais suspects but has not yet proven. Fortunately for Thais, Thraso (still unaware of Pamphila's background) intends to give Pamphila to Thais as a gift. Thais works desperately to free Pamphila from Thraso's control because she is in immediate danger of being violated: Pamphila is a slave, the property of her owner, who may rape her at any moment, or sell her to another who would do the same. Thais's plan to restore Pamphila to her citizen family depends on Pamphila's virginity. Pamphila has no protection until she is transferred into Thais's household; there Thais believes that she and her handmaids can control who has access to Pamphila. This expectation is, of course, foiled when Chaerea gains access to the house in the guise of a eunuch and rapes the girl.

Thais's motives for obtaining possession of Pamphila are twofold: to protect her sister's integrity and to protect herself by acquiring a citizen patron. She confesses her reasons to Phaedria when she tries to persuade him to leave town for three days, lest his presence cause Thraso to withhold Pamphila out of jealousy. Taking Phaedria into her confidence, she tells him (*Eun.* 144–49):

nunc ego eam, mi Phaedria,
multae sunt causae quam ob rem cupio abducere:
primum quod soror est dicta; praeterea ut suis
restituam ac reddam. sola sum; habeo hic neminem
neque amicum neque cognatum: quam ob rem, Phaedria,
cupio aliquos parere amicos beneficio meo.

Now, my Phaedria, there are many reasons why I desire that she be returned to me: first, because she is said to be my sister; furthermore, so that I may restore and return her to her family. I am alone; I have no one here, neither a friend nor relative: for this reason, Phaedria, I desire to procure some friends for my benefit.

The first reason she gives is her sentimental attachment to the girl who was raised as her sister. Like the sisters of *Bacchides*, the two women briefly find themselves in the same city, and the elder works to keep it that way. The second reason Thais gives is a practical one: by restoring Pamphila to her citizen family, Thais hopes to acquire an Athenian patron. She has no social support in Athens because she is a *meretrix* and new to town, but she hopes to gain the protection of a citizen family out of their gratitude for restoring Pamphila. After Phaedria leaves the stage, Thais restates her concern for her sister in a monologue (*Eun.* 202–5):

et quidquid huius feci causa virginis
feci; nam me eius fratrem spero propemodum
iam repperisse, adulescentem adeo nobilem;
et is hodie venturum ad me constituit domum.

Anything that I've done I've done for the sake of the girl: for I hope that I have already found her brother, such a noble young man; and he has arranged to come to my house today.

Her reference to Pamphila as the *virgo* underscores her anxiety regarding the protection of Pamphila's chastity—for Pamphila's sake, and for the sake of Thais's plan. Much like Bacchis of *Bacchides*, Thais tends to her own needs and those of her sister at the same time, and, as in *Bacchides*, these two goals are not in conflict. Restoring Pamphila to her citizen family helps Pamphila and Thais. Terence has constructed the play so that the two story lines can be resolved with the same happy outcome: the audience wants Pamphila, a "lost" citizen, to reclaim her place in the citizen world, lest a citizen suffer the low-status life of prostitution; and the audience will delight that Thais, a "hooker with a heart of gold," gets rewarded for her genuine affection for her lover by acquiring a citizen patron.

The audience's anxiety over the potential violation of Pamphila is heightened by conventional misunderstandings and plot twists. Although Thraso has promised to hand Pamphila over as long as Thais's other lovers stay away, he can still tarnish Pamphila's reputation in the meantime by treating her like the music girl he believes her to be. The parasite, Gnatho, stokes Thraso's jealousy and suggests that, every time Thais pays attention to another man, Thraso should pay more attention to Pamphila. Because Thraso does not have all the information, he mistakenly thinks Chremes (Pamphila's brother) is a rival lover and thus nearly does tarnish Pamphila's reputation. When Chremes arrives at the party, Thraso asks the servants to call for Pamphila to entertain them, an activity inappropriate for a woman of citizen status and one that might well lead to events that foil Thais's plan. By calling on Pamphila, Thraso threatens to break his deal with Thais, because he believes, falsely, that she broke it first. Moreover, he believes Pamphila is a slave and treats her accordingly. Thais, the only person aware of Pamphila's true status, gives Pamphila the safeguards that are appropriate for a citizen: when Thraso finally makes good on his promise and transfers Pamphila to Thais's house, Thais charges the women of her house with protecting Pamphila, saying *curate istam diligenter virginem* (505).

While Thais concentrates her efforts on protecting Pamphila from Thraso and ill repute, Chaerea, the younger brother of Phaedria, gains access to Thais's house

in the guise of a eunuch and rapes Pamphila. When Thais's handmaids, Pythias and Dorias, discover the rape, they are upset at the trauma Pamphila has been through and angry at the impious scoundrel (*illum scelerosum atque impium*, 643) who committed the crime. The handmaids, who had been in charge of Pamphila's protection, would naturally fear punishment for failing at their task, but the sentiments expressed by Pythias and Dorias show that they also feel genuine concern for the girl. Pythias expresses shock at Chaerea's daring (644), reports that he tore Pamphila's dress and hair during the rape (645–46), and proclaims a desire to take physical revenge upon him by clawing his eyes out (647–48). As the maids have shared in the protection of Pamphila before her rape, so after the rape they share her distress. Their reactions show that the slave women in Thais's house feel a strong sense of empathy for a fellow slave girl whom they have only just met. Pythias and the older women were given the responsibility of protecting Pamphila, a beautiful and rather young girl who had just been introduced to the household. When she suffers a violent and traumatic rape, the slave women are upset because this is the type of horror from which they wanted to protect her.

While Thais's reasons for protecting Pamphila are stated explicitly in *Eunuch*, we have far less evidence from which to evaluate Chrysis's relationship with her sister, because, as I have already stated, Chrysis dies before the start of *Andria*. Her reasons for allowing her sister to remain in an exclusive relationship are unknown, and their household certainly would have brought in more money if Glycerium had taken on multiple clients. Glycerium's exclusivity is, of course, necessary if her citizen status is to be recognized—hence Terence would not have written the play any other way. Regardless, her motivations are inconsequential to the plot, which is concerned only with the aftermath of Chrysis's death. Unlike Thais, who has to plan for her own future in addition to her sister's, Chrysis can put her sister's needs first. In her deathbed speech, she underscores the danger that Glycerium is in because she is young and beautiful (*And.* 286–89):

mi Pamphile, huius formam atque aetatem vides,
nec clam te est quam illi nunc utraeque inutiles
et ad pudicitiam et ad rem tutandam sient.

My Pamphilus, you see her beauty and her youth, and it is no secret to you how useless each of these things is toward protecting her chastity and her possessions.

Members of the audience, who know that Glycerium is secretly a citizen, would have accepted the inviolability of her body. But a citizen woman unattached to a

citizen man has no protection, and for this reason Chrysis entrusts her sister to Pamphilus (*And.* 289–96):

quod ego per hanc te dexteram oro et genium tuom,
per tuam fidem perque huius solitudinem 290
te obtestor ne abs te hanc segreges neu deseras.
si te in germani fratris dilexi loco
sive haec te solum semper fecit maxumi
seu tibi morigera fuit in rebus omnibus,
te isti virum do, amicum tutorem patrem; 295
bona nostra haec tibi permitto et tuae mando fidei.

But I beg you, by your right hand and by your god, by your honor and because she is alone, I beg you not to distance yourself from her or abandon her. If I have loved you like a brother, if she has always shown the greatest esteem for you alone, if she has been obedient to you in all things, I give you to her as if a husband, her friend, her protector, her father. I transfer our property to you and entrust it to your care.

Chrysis, Glycerium, and Pamphilus all know about Glycerium's as yet unproven citizen status; she has little protection unless this status is recognized. Chrysis hopes that, by appealing to his affection and morals, she can convince Pamphilus to continue looking after Glycerium even after Chrysis's death. Pamphilus would, of course, be motivated to find Glycerium's birth parents and work toward officially marrying her.

As with the women of *Bacchides* and *Stichus*, Chrysis realizes that the best way to ensure Glycerium's safety is to secure the protection of a citizen man. So too with Thais in *Eunuch*. Although Thais is unaware that Pamphila has been raped, she believes that Pamphila is in danger from a different source: Thraso storms toward Thais's house in a jealous rage, intent on forcibly reclaiming Pamphila (739). Because Thais is all too aware that she and her handmaids will not be able to ward off a group of rowdy men, she rushes to bring Chremes up to date so that he can help protect Pamphila. Thais hopes that if she can convince Chremes that Pamphila is his sister, he will be inspired to stand up to Thraso and prevent Pamphila's abduction—perhaps not with physical force (for he proves to be a wimp) but with the force of the law. Chremes alone is no match for the men and shows quickly his cowardice, attempting to slip out and gather a group of friends before Thraso arrives. Great persistence is required on the part of Thais to stop

him, and she hopes that Chremes's citizen status will at least prevent Thraso from attacking him. She tells Chremes (*Eun.* 759–60):

immo hoc cogitato: quicum res tibi peregrinus est,
minus potens quam tu, minus notus, minus amicorum hic habens.

Rather, think about this: the man you have to deal with is a foreigner,
less powerful than you, less known, and he has fewer friends here.

Her comment underscores her own precarious position in Athens and shows the need for having citizen male connections. She is disappointed at Chremes's lack of courage, but her options are limited, so she chooses to coach Chremes into being a more effective champion (765–69). She will make the best use of the only possible protector that she has.

When Thais learns of Pamphila's rape, she focuses on salvaging the situation for her sister's sake and for her own: Chremes will not recognize Pamphila as his sister if she has been raped, although he may be willing to do so if the rapist agrees to marry her. Thais informs Chaerea how his actions have affected her plans for herself and for her sister (*Eun.* 867–71):

neque edepol quid nunc consili capiam scio
de virgine istac: ita conturbasti mihi
rationes omnis, ut eam non possim suis
ita ut aequom fuerat atque ut studui tradere,
ut solidum parerem hoc mi beneficium, Chaerea.

By Pollux, now I don't know how I can carry out my plan for the girl: you have really disturbed all my preparations; I cannot restore her to her family in a way that is fair, nor can I restore her in the way I worked so hard for, a way that would allow me to procure a guaranteed favor, Chaerea.

This speech brings us back to Thais's two stated motives from earlier in the play: doing the right thing for Pamphila and restoring her in a way that will earn Thais a *solidum beneficium* from a citizen patron. It is fair and just (*aequom*) to Pamphila to protect her reputation and give her the best possible chance for a secure future, and, as stated previously, the play is designed so that what is good for Pamphila is also good for Thais. Hence Thais worries that both efforts have been simultaneously thwarted.

Chaerea responds by turning the tables, soliciting Thais's help in securing Pamphila's hand in marriage. Thais can no longer place Chremes in her debt, but Chaerea places himself in Thais's debt (*Eun.* 872–75):

at nunc dehinc spero aeternam inter nos gratiam
fore, Thais. saepe ex huiusmodi re quapiam et
malo principio magna familiaritas
conflatast. quid si hoc quispiam voluit deus?

But now I hope that there can be everlasting favor between us on account of this matter, Thais. Often from this sort of thing and from bad beginnings the spark of a great friendship arises. What if some god willed this to happen?

Chaerea invites Thais into a permanent relationship of mutual favors. Thais, as head of her household, has the authority to enter into such a friendship, but Chaerea is not in a position to commit his father's household to the same friendship. Nonetheless, he now understands that he has committed a grave offense. What is more, he is desperately in love and requires a protector to help him escape punishment and secure the girl he desires (at least he is in love in his own mind—he states at 878 that he committed his actions *causa amoris*; the modern reader might question whether rape can be committed out of love, but the ancient audience would not have). He entrusts himself completely to Thais, asking her to help arrange his marriage to Pamphila (*Eun.* 885–88):

nunc ego te in hac re mi oro ut adiutrix sies,
ego me tuae commendo et committo fidei,
te mihi patronam capio, Thais, te obsecro:
emoriar si non hanc uxorem duxero.

Now I beg you to be my helper in the matter, I entrust myself and commit myself to your protection, I take you as my patron, Thais, I beg you: I will die if I do not marry this girl.

Although he does not have the authority to offer his family's assistance, Thais heeds his pleas and helps arrange his marriage to Pamphila. Thais understands that this is her best chance at salvaging the situation: now that Pamphila has been raped, her rapist is the only acceptable husband if the rape becomes known. Thais can restore Pamphila to her brother with arrangements for a respectable citizen marriage.

What is more, although Chaerea has foiled Thais's plans to gain Chremes as a patron (his gratitude will be minimal), the new arrangements earn Thais the patronage of Chaerea's family, as Chaerea explains to his family slave: *Thais patri se commendavit, in clientelam et fidem / nobis dedit se* ("Thais entrusted herself to my father, and gave herself over to our patronage and our protection," 1039–40). She now has the protected status of client in their household.³⁶ In the end, Chremes could not have offered her much, but Chaerea's family can and does, in recognition of a double bond uniting the two families: Chaerea will marry Pamphila, and Thais will resume her relationship with Phaedria. It is a good thing that Thais has chosen to work with Chaerea instead of against him; although she could not be assured that this action would result in a citizen patron for her, she has understood that it is her best chance for citizen gratitude and Pamphila's best chance for a good life.

The final scene is troubling to many because Phaedria's decision to share Thais seems an unfitting reward for a woman who has worked so hard to control her own future. While it is true that she is completely denied agency here, it should be noted that her control was always limited: it has, from the beginning, been necessary for her to keep Thraso as a paying lover, although she does not care for him, so that she can continue her relationship with the much poorer Phaedria, whom she loves. The final arrangement is made without her consent, but it does satisfy her goals for herself: long-term support, and a continuation of her relationship with Phaedria. The desires of Phaedria, Thraso, and Thais are not in conflict—a happy ending not uncommon in New Comedy.³⁷

Conclusion

While sisterly affection is present in all four of the relationships discussed, the relationships are not unaffected by difficult circumstances. The sisters of *Stichus* struggle to cope with poverty and paternal pressure, and they do not completely agree on how best to deal with these stressors. Ultimately, however, they decide that it is important for them resolve their differences and present a united front. The sisters of *Bacchides* work to stay together, but each must separately consider her own financial security as well. Thais in *Eunuch* wants to help Pamphila but also needs to make plans for her own future; fortunately, these two goals align. Chrysis of *Andria* has no future to look forward to and for this reason can devote all her efforts to protecting Glycerium. One concern that comes to the forefront is the women's need for protection against male control, and the sisterly bond often facilitates this protection: the sisters' cooperation in *Stichus* allows them to stay with their current husbands, rather than cede to their father's wish for divorce; the

sisters of *Bacchides* purchase Soror's freedom so that they may remain together in Athens; and Pamphila and Glycerium could not have reunited with their birth families without the help of their foster sisters.

The sisterly bond is a powerful motivator for women to challenge the system that deprives them of control over their own bodies. Their common upbringing fosters a deep affection, and their relatively close ages offer the possibility that they can remain friends throughout life, unlike mothers and daughters, who expect to separate. Like mothers, though, elder sisters may be fiercely protective of their younger siblings. Each woman works within the confines of the prescribed social order: when she cannot make an effective decision for herself or her sister, she tries to influence the decisions that are made on their behalf by men. In order to protect her body, or her sister's, from one man, she may have to entrust it to another: the sisters of *Bacchides* use Pistoclerus and Mnesilochus to protect Soror and purchase her freedom; and the sisters of *Stichus* must convince their father to let them remain with their husbands. The women never have complete control over which men have sexual access to them, but if circumstances present them with two options, they may be able to pick the one that they prefer. The women's position of powerlessness relative to men makes their battle challenging, but sometimes there is strength in numbers: by working together, the sisters of *Stichus* and *Bacchides* have a better chance of achieving their goals. Cooperation is not a meaningful tool for the sisters of *Eunuch* and *Andria*, but when one sister has greater power than the other, she can use it on behalf of her sister: Thais and Chrysis shield their foster sisters from prostitution and facilitate their transition into the citizen world (in the case of Thais, with considerable benefit to herself as well). Both women must convince men to protect their younger sisters, and are able to do so only by the indirect means of flattery and persuasion (and outright begging, in the case of Chrysis); they manipulate men into exercising their power in ways that will benefit the sisters. In this way, each of these women uses the tools available to her to exercise a modicum of power over the female body.

The plays show us that all women, regardless of social status, are vulnerable. The focus on protection of the citizen female body indicates that its vulnerability was a concern for the Roman audience; the vulnerability of prostitutes, on the other hand, is expected and would cause the audience no distress. Plautus and Terence paint a world in which men's control over women's bodies is assumed, and they examine instances in which that control is temporarily put in jeopardy: the sisters in *Stichus* rebel against their father; the two *Bacchides* want to terminate the soldier's contract; and Thais and Chrysis want the power to decide their younger sisters' futures. The plays capitalize on a fear of women's latent strength, showing us that women under duress can exploit their powers of persuasion and

manipulation enough to wrest control from men, at least temporarily. Ultimately, however, the plays discussed in this chapter reaffirm the status quo, for each woman has only moderate success, interfering with the control of one man but delivering that control to another.

The plays offer the fantasy that the women's wishes secretly align with those of men, mitigating any fear that men might have of women's (limited) power: the sisters of *Stichus* oppose their father, but remain loyal to their husbands, and each prostitute works to continue a relationship with a man who has genuine affection for her (although she may push another man out at the same time). Chrysis of *Andria* gives her sister to the man who already loves her, although we have no indication of whether Glycerium returns his affections. Only in *Eunuch* is there a great conflict between the desires of one man and the desires of the women: Thais plans to restore Pamphila to her brother, but Chaerea lays claim to Pamphila's body by force. When Thais's efforts to arrange Pamphila's future amount to nothing, it reaffirms that the citizen male has the ultimate power over the female body—a power that Chaerea abuses. Terence shows us that, even with the cleverest sister working on her behalf, a woman can never truly have an expectation of inviolability.

NOTES

1. See especially Fantham 2004; Manuwald 2004; and Dutsch forthcoming. See also Foley 2001, which addresses relationships between women in Greek tragedy.

2. Because the stage represents outdoor space, and respectable unmarried women could not appear in public, playwrights minimize the amount of time that the unmarried citizen women appear on stage so as to conform to cultural norms. Menander's *Dyskolos* is a notable exception to this rule. The young, unmarried girl has a sizable speaking role because the play is set in the country, and the family lives in relative isolation; this, coupled with the family's poverty, allows for the believable situation in which the young girl works outside in the fields, but it is appropriate for her to do so only in the company of her father (Hunter 1985, 90). Citizen women who are regarded as slaves, such as the sisters in Plautus's *Poenulus*, appear on stage because they visit public spaces appropriate for a prostitute. Thais and Chrysis of Terence's *Eunuch* and *Andria*, respectively, attempt to shield their foster sisters from the public in accordance with what is appropriate for citizen women.

3. Although the second sister was likely unnamed in the Plautine original, the Ambrosian palimpsest refers to her as "Pamphila" (Arnott 1972, 74n2), and for the sake of convenience, I will use that name.

4. Poster 1995, 315.

5. Arnott 1972, 55. A didascalical note to *Stichus* names Menander's (lost, first) *Adelphoi* as its model, and the newly discovered Antioch mosaic confirms that *Philadelphoi* was an

alternate title for the *Adelphoi* (Gutzwiller and Çelik 2012, 590–92); therefore surviving fragments under either title should be attributed to the same play and regarded as the model for *Stichus*. For the fragments of Menander's first *Adelphoi* and his *Philadelphoi*, see Kassel and Austin 1998, 45–53 and 394–99, respectively. See also Fantham in this volume.

6. Extant examples of the trope in Hellenistic literature include Praxinoa and Gorgo in Theocritus's *Idyll* 15, Koritto and Metro in Herodas's sixth mime, and Medea and Chalkiope in Apollonius's *Argonautica* 3. For a discussion of sisters in early Roman tragedy, see Manuwald's chapter in this volume.

7. Arnott 1972, 55–56. The fact that Electra's sister, Chrysothemis, is absent from Euripides's *Electra* makes Sophocles's choice to show sisters in debate all the more prominent.

8. Foley 2001, 173–76. For an analysis of how Antigone and Ismene's speech patterns reflect their different social and ethical positions, see Griffith 2001, 126–36.

9. Arnott 1972, 56.

10. On the role of the *kyrios*, see Harrison 1998, 108–15; and Omitowoju 2002, 117–22.

11. Watson 1967, 77; and Gardner 1986, 6–7.

12. Corbett 1930, 4. The *paterfamilias* also held the right to kill his children or sell them into slavery, although restrictions were placed on these powers over time (Watson 1967, 98–99; Gardner 1986, 6–7).

13. The terms *cum manu* and *sine manu* are modern contrivances based on ancient legal texts (e.g., the jurist Gaius, 1.108–10) that describe the ways in which a wife came into the *manus* of her husband upon marriage. For an explication of these texts, and how a woman could avoid transferring into the *manus* of her husband, see Treggiari 1991, 16–28.

14. Corbett 1930, 122.

15. Morality, particularly *ius* and *officium*, is a major theme of the play, not limited to the arguments of Pamphila. See Petrone 1977 for an illustration of how this moral message is used and abused in the three separate story lines of the play. See Arnott (1972, 57) for the full catalog of moral language in Pamphila's speech.

16. Latin text for *Stichus* and *Bacchides* is taken from Lindsay 1903.

17. For an analysis of the sisters' strategy and rhetorical skill, see Krauss 2008.

18. For a summary of the scholarly opinions on the attribution of this fragment, see Page 1970, 180–85; and Gomme and Sandbach 1973, 723–24.

19. Text from Page 1970, 186, here ll. 17–26.

20. Traill 2008, 213–23.

21. See Scafuro (1997, 306–25) for a discussion of social-historical evidence for a father's legal rights in Rome in the time of Plautus.

22. Petrone 1977, 36–39. It was Wagenvoort (1932, 310–11) who first illustrated that the occasion for the play was Scipio's return from Africa.

23. As do Segal (1987, 22) and Poster (1995, 315).

24. Gaiser (1970, 65–69), who reconstructs the opening of *Bacchides*, postulates that three scenes have been lost.

25. *Dis Exapaton* is known only from two papyri and six ancient citations, which

together give us about one hundred lines. The papyri are published as *P. Oxy* 4407 (Handley and Wartenberg 1997) and *P. Antinoopolis* 122 (Barns and Zilliacus 1967); the latter appears to contain the Greek original for Plautus's *Bacchides*, lines 494–526. The six additional fragments can be found in Koerte and Thierfelder (1957, 2:49–50) (fragments 109–14).

26. Henry 1985, 99.

27. McGinn 2004, 59–61; Cohen 2006, 101. See Fantham (1975, 49–50) on *metics* in particular.

28. Fantham 1975, 50–51; Cohen 2006, 112.

29. See Cohen (2006, 109–12) on the use of contracts by prostitutes.

30. See Rosivach (1986, 430–34) on the stage setting of this play.

31. See McClure (1999, 62–68) and Dutsch (2008, 49–91) on the verbal genre of women's seductive persuasion. Karakasis (2003, 49–52) analyzes the blandishments of this scene specifically.

32. Maurach 1983 discusses the central theme of deception (a key part of the Menandrian original) illustrated in this scene: Bacchis tries and fails four times to get Pistoclerus to join her scheme, and his help is finally enlisted only through deception. The fact that Pistoclerus's involvement began under false pretenses facilitates Bacchis's exploitation of him.

33. There is a lengthy scholarly conversation about variations on the prostitute stock type in New Comedy. Both Plautus and Terence acknowledge that the stock type of the *meretrix mala* is inherent to the genre, and both boast that they have crafted characters who defy the stereotype (Ter. *Eun.* 37–41 and Plaut. *Capt.* 57–58). Donatus, too, observes that Terence dared to make *meretrices honesti cupidas* (courtesans desirous of virtue) in defiance of expectations (Don. *Ad Hec.* 774). The language of the playwrights and ancient commentators (including Plutarch's *Quaest. conv.* 7.8.712C) influences that language used by modern scholars, who often refer to “good” and “bad” prostitutes, or “greedy whores” and “hookers with a heart of gold.” See Anderson 1984 and Zeitlin 2005. See also Gruen (1991, 1) and Fantham (2002, 237) for discussions of Terence's skill in mixing elements of both stock types to create interesting characters. See Gilula 1980; Brown 1990; and Knorr 1995 for arguments about how and why they believe the dichotomy breaks down entirely.

34. For more on Thais's competing desires for love and long-term stability, see Konstan 1986.

35. Text for *Andria* and *Eunuch* is taken from Kauer and Lindsay 1926.

36. The language of patronage (*cliens, fides*) is perhaps a compliment to Thais, who, as a woman and a prostitute, does not participate in the patronage system in the way that citizen men do. Pepe (1972, 143–44) draws attention to the fact that, although one can technically be both a client and a patron, in reality, it is incongruous for Thais to both be in the protection of Chaerea's father and be the protector of Chaerea. Such convoluted situations are typical of New Comic humor.

37. There is a great deal of scholarship on the final scene, but see particularly Konstan 1986, 392–93. For a different view, see Fantham in this volume.

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Roman Women in the *Fabula Togata*

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Roman audiences at civic festivals in the latter half of the second century BCE could expect to be entertained by plays of various sorts, including *fabulae palliatae* based on originals of Greek New Comedy, tragedies similarly adapted from Attic models, and the occasional *praetexta* that grandly dramatized events of Rome's legendary past or of the city's more recent history. The extant scripts of the comedies of Plautus and Terence have always enjoyed pride of place in the study of Republican drama, while the fragments of the serious dramas of Ennius, Pacuvius, and Accius have been subjected to critical and imaginative scrutiny, adding further to our understanding of the vibrant performance culture of the mid-Republican city. A fourth genre, the light plays collectively referred to, since at least the time of Varro, as the *fabula togata*, has been generally overshadowed by its Greek-clad counterpart.¹ The *fabula togata* (a play dressed in a toga) seems in broad terms to have been similar to the *palliata* in its focus on the domestic life of bourgeois society, but as its name implies, it was not set in the cities of the Hellenistic Greek world. Instead, the action of these plays was laid at Rome and the smaller local centers of the Italian peninsula, particularly but not exclusively in Latium.²

In the present discussion I explore the fragments of plays of Titinius and Afranius where, I think, it is possible to reconstruct enough information to say something substantive about the experiences of women, specifically in their roles as past, present, and future wives, that were represented on stage in the *togata*. Much other material could have been highlighted, for there are many hints that women in the *togata* were given a degree of independence quite distinct from the circumscribed roles imposed on them in the *palliata*. One such hint emerges from

a note in the longer commentary on Vergil's *Aeneid* transmitted under the name of Servius. In a note explaining the use of *victrix* at *Aeneid* 11.160, where Evander mourns over the body of Pallas, the commentator remarks that, in the *togata*, women who outlived their husbands—who held funerals for them, even—were called *victrices*.³ That description is tantalizing, but the remark is something of a dead end, since there is not much in the commentator's words to suggest how far they should be pressed for evidence about the depiction of these widows in the *togata*. But their presence is not insignificant, when we take into account the near-complete absence of widows in plays of Plautus and Terence. The descriptor *vidua* belongs to women who are no longer married, a condition that serves as a threat against Matrona in Plautus's *Menaechmi* (and which she later recalls) and is mentioned in connection with both death and divorce in the case of the sisters in Plautus's *Stichus*;⁴ nowhere, however, in the extant remains of Roman comedy is *vidua* applied specifically to a woman who has outlived her husband. The only widow is poor old Sostrata in *Adelphoe*, left alone with her daughter and dependent on a distant relative for support. She stands out in the *palliata* for the uniqueness of her experience, which makes the *victrices* of the *togata* seem all the more significant. The possibility of independent widows in the *togata* gives one hint about the differing depiction of women's experiences in Roman comic genres. And indeed, although the state of the fragments of the *togata* means that our knowledge of the genre and its conventions is rather patchy, the suggestive hints that can be gleaned from the fragments yield a remarkably coherent picture of the roles that women played, a picture frequently suggesting that women in these comedies enjoyed greater independence than the citizen daughters of the *palliata*.

These kinds of differences between the styles of bourgeois comedy in Greek cloaks and Roman togas are significant for our understanding of what happened to comedy when it was reworked for Roman settings. Dissimilarities in the treatment of betrothal, married life, divorce, and second marriages are the primary concern of this chapter, as it is in this material that I think we can observe some of the most profound differences between the *togata* and the *palliata*. In a fragment of Afranius's *Emancipatus* ("The Emancipated Son"), a woman sings for her audience about the role of women in comedies, which suggests that diversity in the comic genres was felt in antiquity as well (Afran. 100–101):

quam beatae scenicae
mihi videntur mulieres, quae iurgio et [beni]volentia
terrent desubito viros!⁵

I think women in comedies are really lucky: with a quarrel and with their will they terrify their men in the blink of an eye!

The character here expresses jealousy of women on the comic stage, and the content of her song implies that the speaker was a woman. The stage women are said to have the ability to subdue their husbands with harsh words and with the force of their own intentions alike, a remark that recalls men's view of their wives in the *palliata*.⁶ Furthermore, these lyrics suggest that the speaker thinks that she does not have the same degree of control as those lucky women on stage. She constructs for herself a role somewhere between dramatic character and audience member. She, too, watches comedies and yearns for the power that women like Cleostrata in *Casina* or Artemona in *Asinaria* have over their husbands, but her desire suggests that her own experience, and that of her compatriots in the *togata*, was qualitatively different.⁷

Even that remark, telling though it is, oversimplifies the various experiences that played out on stage, and it does not take us very far simply to emphasize the stark contrasts between the genres at the expense of the subtle gradations even now visible in the fragments of the *togata*. In the subsequent discussion I sketch the outlines of the plots of several plays, in order to demonstrate something of those subtleties. The discussions, treating Afranius's *Fratriae*, Titinius's *Fullonia* and *Gemina*, and Afranius's *Divortium*, are arranged loosely around a framework of a romance, starting with betrothal and proceeding to married life and divorce. The theme that emerges is that in the *togata*, the lived experiences of women were more varied than the movement toward a "happily ever after" marriage that shapes the comedies of Plautus and Terence, and the women represented in these plays in fact did enjoy a degree of power and independent agency surpassing that of their Greek-costumed counterparts.

Betrothal

Afranius's *Fratriae* demonstrates the ideals of a proper betrothal and marriage, including the suitability of both partners as an essential precondition, in the eyes of the parents who arrange or consent to such a match. The play presents the misbehavior of a father in finding a husband for his daughter, and the conflicts within the family that ensue. The plot seems to have focused on a young woman who was both beautiful and rich (Afran. 156–58):

formosa virgo est: dotis dimidium vocant
isti qui dotis neglegunt uxorias;
praeterea fortis.

She's a beautiful girl: people who don't care about a wife's dowry say that that's half the dowry; on top of her beauty, she's rich.⁸

Her father, however, appears to have been something of a miser and was perhaps unwilling to part with the large dowry necessary to marry her to a suitable match. He intended instead to marry her to an impoverished neighbor of lower social status, so that he could offer a small dowry, presumably on the assumption that the poor neighbor would eagerly accept her with whatever pittance the miser might promise (Afran. 159–60):

dat rustico nesciocui, vicino suo,
perpauperi, cui dicat dotis paululum.

He's giving her to some bumpkin, his very poor neighbor, to whom he can promise a small dowry.

This plan provoked concern in the family for the respectability of the young woman and probably also for the family itself. Someone in the play remarked on the absurdity of a plan to marry the woman to a baker, a match that seemed thoroughly unsatisfactory (Afran. 161–62):

pistori nubat? cur non scribilitario,
ut mittat fratris filio lucuntulos?

She's marrying a baker? Why not a cake maker, so she could send her nephew *lucuntuli*?

These verses contain a joke that reveals a concern not just for the girl and her marriage but also for the family and its continuing status.⁹ The underlying concern is that, with such a marriage, the young woman would not be able to provide for her kin.

The perceived unsuitability of this betrothal, together with its effect on the family, was but one of the obstacles facing the young woman. In all likelihood she preferred another man, who was of higher or at least equal social status.¹⁰ There are substantial traces of a scheme to delay the betrothal that her father intended and to exact money from someone. In one fragment, the speaker promises to explain how to get the money and invites someone to be as deceptive as she likes in service of that goal.¹¹ The motive of exposing someone's dastardly behavior is probably connected to this scheme,¹² while the fact that the action of the play takes place on September 2, an *ater dies* on which no legal business could be conducted, may also point to a plan to delay the betrothal.¹³

It seems logical to assume that the money obtained from this scheme would be

used as a larger dowry to secure the betrothal that the young woman wanted, for her beloved's parents may have been reluctant to welcome a daughter-in-law with a small dowry. Here the plot is on less secure foundations, since the fragments are less revealing. At some point, a young man returns home, bringing his new fiancée with him; he orders a slave to run ahead and announce his arrival and to tell people there to attend to the girl and to behave nicely (Afran. 175–77):

curre, nuntia
venire et mecum <me> speratam adducere:
vide ut puellam curent, conforment probe.¹⁴

Run ahead, announce that I'm coming and I'm bringing my fiancée with me; see to it that they look after the girl and behave properly.

At another point, someone says to the young man (Afran. 174): *speratam non odi tuam* (I don't hate your betrothed). It is difficult to know for certain what prompted this remark, but it could easily come from a father correcting his son's mistaken impressions about the older man's feelings about the new fiancée.

How the play ended cannot now be known. Among the surviving fragments, several references to a meal, to a *scurra*, that is, the usual buffoonish entertainer at dinner in Roman comedy, to elegant clothing and perfumes, to the drawing of water, and to a religious sacrifice may all point to a celebration, perhaps a wedding feast, enjoyed after proper sacrifices.¹⁵ Too much of the play remains obscure for certain conclusions about how it ended, but the schemes to secure a better betrothal and the competing parental concerns for what constitutes a suitable match reveal much about the experiences of a young woman of marriageable age on stage in the *togata*.¹⁶

Married Life

Afranius's *Fratriae* and the different reasons that motivated a betrothal presented in it suggest that the *togata* recognized the possibility that marriages might be pragmatic pairings rather than purely romantic ones. The conflict and turmoil visible in the *palliata* in older married couples could logically, therefore, emerge even sooner after a wedding in the *togata*, and some plays presented young couples in less than harmonious marriages. Titinius's *Gemina* brought on stage a couple suffering in an unhappy marriage. The husband has involved himself with a prostitute, perhaps one of a pair of twins implied by the title of the play. He apparently spends much time in the country with the other woman, away from wife and

home.¹⁷ His wife is angry, but he himself finds cause for complaint, because, in his view, his wife lives a lavish and gluttonous lifestyle.¹⁸ She decides to take action, nearly threatening divorce.¹⁹ Attempts to assuage her anger and to reconcile the couple appear to have been ultimately successful.²⁰

What constituted a successful reconciliation of a married couple in the *togata*, however, stands out as something unexpected. Success entails the restoration not of love and happiness but rather of compliance, on the wife's part, in the service of general domestic harmony. The attitudes presented and affirmed in what appears to have been the ending of this play are especially significant for the experience of married life that they imply. Despite the problem of a philandering husband and continued tensions at home, the wife in this play appears to have resigned herself to that situation (Titin. 58):

sin forma odio sum, tandem ut moribus placeam viro.

If he hates the way I look, at least I can please my husband with my *mores*.

The importance of *mores* in that verse is paralleled by a second fragment, certainly spoken by a woman, probably the wife herself (Titin. 59):

eu ecastor, si sitis moratae ambae ibus pro ut ego moribus.

Great, if you both are concerned with those *mores* as much as I am.

The behaviors included under the label of *mores* are not specified, but it seems reasonable to assume, on the basis of the juxtaposition of beauty and *mores* in the first fragment, that what is meant is obedience and compliance.²¹ In the second fragment, she must be responding to a declaration from two women (*ambae*) that they too will respect and give priority to good *mores*. These fragments imply that three women in this play all decided to respect the importance of good *mores* and what that term implied about a wife's behavior. True love is not restored at the end of the play, nor is it even considered the goal or ideal of married life. What is most important, and what removes the difficulties facing this married couple, is that the women in the play give priority to appropriate behavior.²² And from an extradramatic perspective, we in the audience see an extraordinary acknowledgment of women's independent and voluntary role in making a marriage work quite unlike what is on offer in Greek New Comedy and the *palliata*, where such cooperation is more normally coerced than freely given.

Titinius's *Fullonia* or *Fullones* presents a similar conflict between husband and wife.²³ The conflict is set out in a fragment in which the wife complains about her husband's behavior: he is squandering her property and, what is even worse in her eyes, her dowry (Titin. 15–16):

ego me mandatam meo viro male arbitror,
qui rem disperdit et meam dotem comest.

I think that I have been badly married to my husband,
who is diminishing our property and devouring my dowry.²⁴

But just as in the same playwright's *Gemina*, in this play the wife is not blameless. While the husband wastes money and fritters away his wife's dowry, she does not behave in the manner expected of a wife. Two fragments taken together show an excessively haughty, even arrogant attitude on her part, of a sort quite unimaginable in the citizen women of Greek New Comedy and the Roman *palliata*.²⁵ One almost certainly comes from the wife herself (Titin. 21): *specta formam atque os contempla meum* (Look at my body, and consider my face). The problem becomes clearer in a rebuke of her behavior (Titin. 18–19):

videram ego te virginem
formosam, sponso superbam esse, forma
ferocem.

I had seen you, a beautiful maiden, being haughty toward your fiancé,
relying on your beauty.

Although the speaker of these lines cannot be identified with any certainty, their implication about the behavior of the woman addressed is clear. Even before the marriage, the woman was overly proud of her appearance, and that attitude was directed even at her fiancé.²⁶ That she claims it openly in the course of the play (as Titin. 21 shows) may imply that her attitude did not change after the wedding, which has led to no small amount of strife. An unsound fragment seems to contain angry words from the husband to his wife (Titin. 17): *iam pridem aegre res aut perbiteres*.²⁷ The conflict dramatized in this play seems further to have extended beyond the husband and wife to groups of fullers and weavers (Titin. 22–27), whence the title of the play; although we cannot now know how these conflicts fit together, it is tempting to speculate that the two battles were closely intertwined.

In terms of the conflict between husband and wife, and of the violations of appropriate modesty by the wife and of diligence and frugality by the husband, the play presents a striking version of the lack of harmony in a marriage. Whether harmony was ever restored in this play cannot be known. The prominence of such a conflict, in a play that shows no signs of a trajectory toward a happy marriage at the end, offers a strikingly different version of the typical comic plot about love and marriage. But unhappy couples in the *togata*, unlike their counterparts in the *palliata*, had options not generally broached in the plays of Plautus and Terence.

Divorce and Second Marriages

A significant difference between the *palliata* and the *togata* is suggested by the fact that the *togata*, as we have seen, gives much attention to the experience of life after a wedding. It would not be inaccurate to say that, in that respect, the *togata* represents the happy aftermath of the betrothal toward which the *palliata* generally aims. The experience of life after a wedding in the *togata* also recognizes the possibility that a marriage will end in divorce. In the *palliata*, divorce is a malignant subject, almost a taboo, in spite of the terrible impression of marriage that emerges from the strained relationships of old husbands and their wives. Threats and hints of divorce occasionally occur in the *palliata*, but in almost every instance the danger is neutralized or dismissed. Illustrative is the end of *Menaechmi*, where, as the Epidamnian Menaechmus prepares to sever all bonds with that city, abandon his wife, and return to Syracuse, his split with his wife is never construed as a divorce; Matróna is just part of the Epidamnian property to be sold at auction. Similarly, when Alcúmena threatens to divorce her husband in *Amphitruo*, such ominous overtones as could have been felt are diminished by the farcical nature of that performance, which turns the potentially serious behavior into a bit of silly slapstick.²⁸

In the *togata*, by contrast, divorce is addressed more directly and is presented as a common and viable option that could be followed by a second marriage. Such second marriages, following upon divorce or the death of a spouse, are often presupposed by the family structures implied for these plays. Titles such as Titinius's *Privigna* and Afranius's *Privignus* suggest prominent roles for stepchildren and necessitate positing the existence of blended families in these plays.²⁹ Along the same lines, fragments and titles that indicate relationships forged by marriage, such as Afranius's *Fratriae* ("Sisters-in-Law") and *Mariti* ("Husbands") and Atta's *Socrus* ("The Mother-in-Law"), suggest that the focus of many of these comedies was not on arranging a situation where a wedding could occur but on the experience of life after such a wedding.³⁰ The fragmentary state of these plays obscures

most traces of their plots, so that it is difficult to say what might have transpired on stage in, for example, Afranius's *Mariti*.³¹ The titles and fragments are suggestive, however, of a style of comedy in which life after marriage was as fertile a field for drama as was the removal of obstacles before a wedding.

In the remains of Afranius's *Divortium* are to be found the most significant and fullest traces of a plot about the dissolution of marriage and about a woman's life as a divorcée. What can be recovered of its plot harmonizes in striking ways with Antipho's hollow threats to compel his daughters to divorce their husbands, who have been abroad on business for several years, at the outset of Plautus's *Stichus*.³² Afranius's play seems to have presented a family in crisis, a crisis caused by similar cross-generational meddling. A character's lament allows us to recover most of the problem (Afran. 52–54):

o <in>dignum facinus! adolescentis optumas,
bene convenientes, concord<ant>es cum vireis,
repente viduas factas spurcicia patris!

Oh, how awful! Excellent young women,
getting along well and of one mind with their husbands,
suddenly made husband-less by their father's wickedness!³³

It is perhaps easiest to attribute these words to one of the *adulescentes optumae*, a young woman in a harmonious marriage now made a new divorcée by her father's interference, but almost anyone in the play could speak these words. They suggest that the central problem of the plot was that two young women, probably sisters, were compelled to divorce their husbands unwillingly; unlike the sisters of the *Stichus*, however, the young women in Afranius's *Divortium* saw their marriages actually ended by their father's interference.³⁴

In connection with that compelled divorce, the father sought, with difficulty, to recover the dowry from one of the husbands, who appears to have engaged in some shenanigans to avoid returning it promptly (Afran. 47–49):

qui conere noctu clanculum
rus ire, dotem ne repromittas, vafer,
honeste ut latites et nos ludas diutius.

you who are trying [*subj.*?] to sneak away at night
to the country, so you don't have to repay the dowry, you crafty devil,
to hide out in a respectable way and to deceive us for longer still.

The concern for the dowry and its recovery perhaps suggests the motivation for paternal interference in the marriage. The dowry may have been wanted for other purposes, particularly if, as seems likely, the father is now remarried, which seems a necessary inference from the fact that a *noverca* is mentioned in another fragment.³⁵ The aftermath of this divorce also makes itself felt in some verses where a woman, probably one of the divorced daughters, praises her own character, yet in so doing claims to have no desire to be married again (Afran. 61–63):

vigilans ac sollers, sicca sana sobria:
virosa non sum, et si sum, non desunt mihi
qui ultro dent: aetas integra est, formae satis.³⁶

Watchful and skillful, solid, sound, and sober:
I don't lust after men, and if I did, there are no lack of people
who would give me more (than what I asked for); I'm in the flower of
youth, and pretty enough.

The list of virtues that this young woman attributes to herself is striking. She praises her qualities of character as a sound, upstanding, and respectable woman, as well as attractive. Though she has no particular desire for a man at present, she could easily win one. The particular virtues and qualities here enumerated map neatly onto the virtues of the respectable wife; striking is her use of *virosa*, for elsewhere in Latin in the second century BCE such a quality is reviled as a negative characteristic of men and women,³⁷ while here the woman is bold enough to turn its absence into a virtue. Similarly, the quality that she finds most commendable is not beauty but age: she is young, still of marriageable age, and therefore imagines that she would encounter no difficulties in finding a husband should she want one.

Conclusion

In situating comedy about bourgeois society at Rome and elsewhere in Italy, Titinius and Afranius seem not to have simply located the plots of the *palliata* in Latin towns. The fragmentary state of preservation makes it difficult to recover, in more than a speculative way, how any of these plays developed, but significant material can nevertheless still be recovered from the scraps that do survive. The prominence of women in these fragments in general is itself of no small importance. Of even greater significance is the likelihood that the women of the *togata* lived qualitatively different lives than did their counterparts in the plays of Plautus

and Terence. In several plays, Titinius and Afranius seem to have depicted women beset by challenging circumstances: an unwanted betrothal, a philandering husband, an unhappy marriage, a divorce (whether she wanted it or it was imposed upon her), life as a single divorcée or, to return to the hint with which I opened this chapter, as a widow. In depicting women at different stages of their lives, the *togata* seems to have given greater attention than did the *palliata* to the varied experiences of Roman women, acknowledging that there was more at play than just a happily romantic betrothal, and more options than the unhappy marriages of the older generation that predominate in the *palliata*.

NOTES

1. I quote the fragments of Titinius and Afranius from Ribbeck 1898, except that I have not hesitated to alter Ribbeck's text, which is generally too speculative, where I think improvements are facile or plainly needed.

On the terminology *togata* and *palliata*, see Diomedes, *Gramm.* I 489.14–490.20; Beare 1939.

2. Previous discussions of the genre have emphasized the geographic transfer of the situations of the *palliata* but proceeded from the basic assumption that not much else was changed, making the *togata* rehash the "Greek" mores of the *palliata* in Latium (see, e.g., Leigh 2004, 9–12); surveys of scholarship are provided by Tabacco 1975, with updates (to be used with caution) in López 2000a and 2000b. This chapter cannot present detailed rebuttal of those views, but it will sketch one important difference between the ideology and outlook of the two comic genres.

3. Servius auctus, Verg. *Aen.* 11.160: *vivendo vici: id est supervixi: veteres enim "vivendo vincere" dicebant supervivere, ut* (Verg. *Georg.* 2.295) *"multa virum volvens vivendo saecula vincit"; nam et in togatis "victrices" appellantur, quae viros extulerunt. Plautus in Epidico (177): "quia tibi licuit eum vivendo vincere."* ("vivendo vici [I have surpassed in life]: that is, I have outlived: the ancients used the term "vivendo vincere" [to surpass in life] to say "to outlive," as in (Verg. *Georg.* 2.295) "rolling many generations of men past, it surpasses in life"; also in the *togatae* women who have buried their husbands are called "victrices" [= "winners"]. Plautus in the *Epidicus* (177): "since you were able to overcome him by living.") Several readings in this note suggest that it was composed from memory and not by unrolling scrolls to locate particular lines: at *Georg.* 2.295, the proper reading is *durando*, not *vivendo*, and Apocides's line actually speaks about Periphanes's wife (*quia licitumst eam tibi vivendo vincere*, "because you were able to outlive her"), which suggests that the quotation was altered by someone who, not realizing that the use of *vivendo vincere* in Plautus's *Epidicus* had nothing to do with the *togata*, altered *eam* to match what was implied about *victrices*.

4. Plautus, *Men.* 113, 720, 726, 727; indirectly, *Stich.* 2a.

5. On the text and meter (trochaic lyrics) of this fragment, see Welsh 2013, 270–71.

6. For *iurgium* as a feature of relationships of husbands and wives in the *palliata*, cf. Plautus, *Men.* 127; *Merc.* 557; Terence, *Hec.* 513. The free-wheeling behavior of Cleostrata in Plautus's *Casina* gives a good illustration of what such *volentia* might have looked like. What the husband in Caecilius Statius's *Plocium* recounts about his wife's treatment of him and what he imagines that she says to her friends (Caecil. 150–57 = Aulus Gellius, *NA* 2.23.10) likewise throw light on how such behavior might terrify a comic husband.

7. The comment at Donatus, *Ter. Eun.* 57, that it was almost impermissible to depict slaves being more clever than their masters in the *togata* (*concessum est in palliata poetis comicis servos dominis sapientiores fingere, quod idem in togata non fere licet*; “In the *palliata* comic poets may depict slaves as being smarter than their masters, which is almost impermissible”), while also overly simplifying the issue (cf. Afran. 189–91), provides further evidence that readers of Roman comedy felt that the two genres differed in more than just their settings; cf. Seneca, *Ep.* 8.8, Horace's pairing of the *togata* with the *praetexta* (*Ars Poetica* 285–88), and, perhaps, Quintilian, *Inst.* 10.1.100 with Welsh 2010.

8. Nonius p. 306.17 (*fortis etiam dives*, “*fortis* also means ‘rich’”), who excerpted a complete script of *Fratriae* at first hand, warrants interpreting *fortis* to mean that the girl's family is well off, for which cf. Plautus, *Trin.* 1133, *eum sororem despondisse suam in tam fortem familiam* (that he has arranged for his sister's marriage into such a wealthy family). Gratwick's (1982, 733) suggestion that *fortis* in fact refers to the girl's healthy constitution would be more compelling were the outlines of the joke not so clear (“people without money say that beauty is worth just as much as money; well, she has both!”).

9. A *lucuntulus* was a kind of baked good (cf. Varro, *Sat. Men.* 417, 508; Paulus p. 106.27; Statius, *Silv.* 1.6.17; Apuleius, *Met.* 10.13), here used in a pun on the adjective *luculentus* (cf. Plautus, *Men.* 141 with Gratwick ad loc.), which is more common in Republican drama for things that are “excellent” or “great,” including tangible goods and money (cf. Plautus, *Rud.* 1320; *Truc.* 344–45).

10. The feelings attributed to the young woman in question do not emerge from the fragments, and it remains an open question to what extent her own desires and those of her family prompted the attempts to circumvent the father's intentions. The possibility that she participated in the scheme (see next note), however, and the general pattern in the *togata* that grants to female characters a significant degree of independent will suggest that her own feelings played no small part in prompting the comic scheming in this play.

11. Afran. 168–69: *nunc vide, hoc quo pacto ego aurum in medium proferam. / tu, †castalia,† cogita, tu finge, fabricare uti libet* (now see how I'll bring this gold out into plain sight. You, †castalia,† think, invent, fabricate as you like). Afran. 173, *id aurum me condonat litteris* (she/he granted me that gold by letter), could be connected to the same scheme.

12. Afran. 164: *commemorabo, ostendam illius facta et spurcitiam improbi* (I'll recall and demonstrate the deeds and rotten behavior of that wicked man).

13. Afran. 163: *Septembris heri Kalendae, hodie ater est dies* (Yesterday was the first of September; today is an *ater dies*). This fragment and Nonius's definition of *dicere* (= *promittere*) given in connection with Afran. 159–60 together imply that the legal actionability of *sponsalia* and *dotis dictio* was given some attention in this comedy. Such promises

were apparently no longer actionable in Rome when Afranius wrote for the stage (see Watson 1967, 14–17; Treggiari 1991, 142–44), but the cities of Latium were more conservative in this respect (Aulus Gellius, *NA* 4.4.1–4), which is also of no small significance for our understanding of the *togata* and its relationship with the *palliata* more generally.

14. Ribbeck's apparatus shows that *speratum*, in the third edition, is a simple misprint for *speratam*.

15. Afran. 182, 183, 184 (meal), 185 (*scurra*), 178–80 (clothing and perfumes), 187–87¹ (water), 170–72 (sacrifice).

16. Similar concerns that a young man was not of sufficiently high status to win a woman's hand were also represented in Titinius's *Setina*.

17. Titin. 43–44: *si rus cum scorto constituit ire, clavis ilico / abstrudi iubeo, rusticae togae ne sit copia* (If he has decided to go to the country with his prostitute, then I'll order that the keys be hidden away, so he can't have access to the country house), but the precise interpretation of *rustica toga* is much debated. The two fragments at Titin. 39–42 have other characters rebuking the husband for being away from home.

18. Her anger is demonstrated in Titin. 43–44 and 45–46, and is implied in several other fragments; his complaints, Titin. 37–38: *satis esse libram aiebant / ambobus farris. intritae <mea> plus comest sola uxor* (They said a pound of flour was enough for both of them. My wife alone eats up more unground meal).

19. Titin. 43–44 (above, n. 17); Titin. 55, *mulier credo advorsum illum res suas conqueritur* (The woman, I think, is complaining to him about her property), could easily belong to a scene involving a dispute about the division of property or the return of a dowry. Again the independence this character enjoys is striking; by comparison, Matrona in the *Menaechmi* requires her father's intervention to make the threat of divorce have any force.

20. Titin. 56–57.

21. For *mores* or *morigeratio* in the sense of the compliance and obedience expected of a wife, see Afran. 372–74, 380–81; Williams 1958; Treggiari 1991, 229–30.

22. It is worth raising the possibility, although no evidence supports it, that Titinius's *Gemina* may represent a reworking of Plautus's *Menaechmi* in a Roman milieu, working out the problems and dramatic conflicts that the Plautine play presented within the constraints of Roman ideals and expectations.

23. The play is quoted by Nonius nine times under the title *Fullones* (eight and perhaps all nine deriving from the first glossary), and four times under the title *Fullonia* (all from the list of alphabetical verbs); the latter title is also given once by Festus. It is impossible to determine which is the authentic title Titinius applied to the play.

24. *Mandare* in this sense is unusual but paralleled at Plautus, *Men.* 783, in Matrona's complaints to her father.

25. Such boasting by a female character was a feature of other plays as well. See below, on Afranius's *Divortium*, and compare Titin. 109/110: *Paula mea, amabo, pol tuam ad laudem addito 'praefiscini'* (Dear Paula, please, be sure to say *praefiscini* when you praise yourself!); *praefiscini* is, as Iulius Romanus says (Charis. p. 274.28 Barwick), an utterance aiming to avert bewitchment.

26. There is strikingly little evidence for the expected or customary behavior of a betrothed couple; the scant information available is presented by Treggiari (1991, 159–60). It seems safe to assume that the haughtiness visible in the fragments of this play would not have seemed to be proper behavior either during the engagement or afterward.

27. *aegre res* Buecheler: *egressa* ω. Owing to the uncertainty of the text and the fact that the thought is obviously incomplete I am hesitant to offer a translation, but the sense is perhaps something like “you (ought?) already to put up with it, or leave.”

28. Divorce in the *palliata* has been the subject of much attention from a variety of angles; see Fredershausen 1912; Watson 1967, 48–56; McDonnell 1983; Treggiari 1991, 435–38; Rosenmeyer 1995; Scafuoro 1997, 306–25; Braund 2005.

29. For the family structure in Afranius’s *Privignus* and the relationships of the characters in that play, see Welsh 2012. In addition to these titles, cf. Titin. 65–66, 155; stepparents, particularly stepmothers, are naturally also prominent: Afran. 57–58 (with Watson 1995, 92–134, esp. 131–33). In the *palliata*, by contrast, Phanostrata in the *Cistellaria* is a step-mother but that aspect of her character is inconsequential; Donatus, Ter. *Eun.* 9.3, observes that a *noverca* was of some importance in Menander’s *Phasma*.

30. Here it is significant that many plays seem to follow the model of Terence’s *Hecyra* in presupposing a wedding and exploring life after such a union.

31. But the sole fragment of that play (Afran. 206: *meon obsequere amori? :: oboedibo tibi*, “Will you yield to my love?” :: “I will obey”), which suggests that love and obedience are interrelated, raises tantalizing possibilities about its representation of marriage.

32. On *Stichus*, cf. Feltoovich in this volume.

33. The text of this fragment is difficult. Probability inclines toward restoring, with Delrio, the set phrase (*o indignum facinus*, “What an outrage!” (seven times in Terence, once in Plautus), but Dorio’s ironic *quam indignum facinus* (Terence, *Phorm.* 511) at least suggests the possibility that the paradoxos could be correct and similarly ironic. Müller’s *concordantes* is far better than Ribbeck’s *bene convenientes*, <bene> *concordes* (getting along well and are of the same opinion), since the iterated adverb is unparalleled and comic verse prefers to construe such an adverb *apo koinou* (cf. Terence, *Ad.* 917–19; Plautus, *Men.* 125; on the general pattern, see Gratwick 1993, 134 ad *Men.* 10).

34. This is a necessary inference from the title and from further fragments soon to be discussed. By contrast, in Afranius’s *Simulans* a father, like Antipho in *Stichus*, merely pretends to initiate his daughter’s divorce (Afran. 301).

35. Afran. 57–58. One cannot now know whether she played any role in instigating the divorce.

36. Nonius Marcellus, who preserves this fragment, explains *virosa* as an adjective applied to women who are *virorum appetentes vel luxuriosae* (who seek men or are fond of luxury) (p. 21.34). The latter definition looks to be invented on the basis of this passage, but there is not much reason to believe it. It is perhaps based on Afranius’s *dent*, and in any case places too much emphasis on a dowry or gifts, while the speaker herself gives pride of place to her virtuous morals and character.

37. Scipio Aemilianus, *ORF* 21.17 (= Aulus Gellius, *NA* 6.12.5); Lucilius 287 Krenkel (= Nonius p. 21.34).

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Haut facul . . . femina una invenitur bona?

Representations of Women in Republican Tragedy

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Since Roman tragedies (*fabulae crepidatae*) were based on the same repertoire of Greek myths as Greek tragedies and were typically developed on the basis of existing Greek plays, it comes as no surprise that such Roman dramas feature a number of female characters, as Greek tragedies do. Roman tragedies also include explicit remarks about women. However, while women in classical Greek tragedy have been extensively studied,¹ there has been no comparable comprehensive or systematic research on the Roman side.²

Roman Republican tragedies only survive in fragments, and, by definition, fragments come without, or with very little, context. Thus it must remain uncertain whether any extant comments on women reflect general views, conveyed by the drama as a whole, or represent the opinions of an individual character, which might be supported or challenged in the course of the play. Yet there seem to be changes, on the Republican stage, to familiar females and to the way they are characterized. Also, the Roman plays discuss both attitudes toward women and female characteristics. These factors indicate that the role of women in Republican tragedy was not simply taken over from Greek models as a necessary component but was actively shaped by the Roman poets.

Therefore, one needs to investigate whether women in Roman tragedy resemble those in Greek tragedy or whether Roman playwrights made particular selections or modifications to the depiction of mythical heroines on stage, in line with their

own poetic agendas or with views in Roman society current in their time. Likewise, it is necessary to consider whether the poets treated female and male protagonists in Roman tragedies differently. Finally, one must ask whether the treatment of women in Republican tragedies gives a single coherent picture or reflects a range of attitudes.

In order to suggest answers to these questions (insofar as the fragmentary evidence allows), this study begins by reviewing the presence of, and comments on, women in Republican tragedy and then goes on to consider, through a series of examples, the representation of female characters in known Roman tragedies.³ For purposes of comparison, this study is followed by a brief look at the depiction of women in a specifically Roman variety of serious drama, in plays based on events from Roman history (*fabulae praetextae*). The collection and discussion of a substantial body of material will provide the basis for some general conclusions.⁴

On the Greek side, it has often been observed that there is a paradoxical contradiction between the prominence of female characters in fifth-century Greek tragedies and the relatively minor public role of women in contemporary society: only one completely preserved tragedy features no female characters (Sophocles's *Philoctetes*), while numerous surviving and also fragmentary plays are named for female characters.⁵ Even ancient Greek writers remarked on the large number of women in tragedies and comedies and on the wicked deeds of women shown on stage (Lucian, *Salt.* 28; Achilles Tatius, *Leuc.* 1.8.4–7). A similar tension applies to individual playwrights: since his depiction in Aristophanes's comedies (Ar. *Thesm.*), Euripides has often been portrayed as a misogynist, while his plays contain some of the most memorable female stage characters according to other recipients.

When poets in Rome appropriated the literary genre of tragedy from the Greeks and started to compose their own dramas on the model of Greek plays from about 240 BCE onward, they adopted Greek myths as the subject matter for tragedies. As in Greece, the selection of mythic stories in Rome frequently featured women in major roles, perhaps because Roman poets sought to cover the main stories represented in Greek drama, including those starring figures such as Antigone, Iphigenia, and Medea. Roman playwrights did not, however, transpose all Greek myths, and they modified those that they chose to rework.⁶ The most obvious indication that modifications of Greek plays by Roman tragic poets could affect the representation of women is the replacement of the chorus of women of Chalcis in Euripides's *Iphigenia in Aulis* by a chorus of soldiers in Ennius's *Iphigenia*: a passage transmitted as uttered by the chorus (Gell. *NA* 19.10.11–12) deals with *otium* and *negotium*. Given that the characters are neither at home (*domi*) nor on a military campaign (*militia*), the speakers are likely to be men.

Judging from what remains of their plots, it appears that there were more Roman Republican tragedies than classical Greek ones that probably did not include female characters (e.g., plays such as Accius's *Epinausimache* and *Nyctegresia* dealing with the battles before Troy). Even so, all major Roman Republican tragic playwrights produced a number of tragedies that feature female characters in their titles, which make up between 20 and 50 percent of their total known output.⁷ There are also plays named for male heroes, such as Accius's *Astyanax* or Pacuvius's *Medus*, that clearly include women in central roles. Women can also come on stage as groups, when they form a chorus, as was presumably the case in Accius's *Phoenissae* and *Troades* or in Naevius's *Lycurgus* and Accius's *Bacchae*.⁸ The two latter examples are particularly interesting, since they show women not only taking part in the action but also as a special group associated with a god.⁹ There are also female servants and attendants, such as Medea's nurse in Ennius's *Medea*, and various unnamed, subsidiary figures.

Differences in customs for women according to their country and culture (as is also the case for men) are sometimes indicated, as the following fragment along with Cicero's comments indicates:

Therefore, those who gave Greece the form of their governments wanted the bodies of young men to be strengthened by toil; the Spartans transferred this even to women, who, in other cities, "are hidden by the shadows of the walls" in a most gentle style of living. They, however, wanted that "there not be anything similar to these for Spartan maidens, for whom the wrestling ground, Eurotas, sun, dust, labor, and military service are more of a concern than barbarous fecundity."¹⁰

As in Greek tragedies, female protagonists of Roman tragedies tend to belong to well-known, noble families, and their fate and actions are often determined by their role within the family. For instance, they may be involved in conflicts with husbands, parents, or children; there are dramatic situations when mothers almost kill their children, when children seek their mothers, when mothers and children who had been separated recognize each other, or when women suffer as victims of their husbands or other family members or plot revenge against them. Also, because of the mythical setting, women can appear as victims of divine intervention.¹¹ Whether justly or unjustly, women may then be held guilty and considered responsible for such relationships as well as their consequences, as comments on Helen and Danae suggest.¹²

The general position of women in the mythical world seems to conform to the standard role of women in classical society: for example, women get married (e.g., Pac. *Trag.* 113–14; 115; 167 R.^{2–3} = 119; 120–21; 184 W. = 88; 89; 126 Schierl 2006 [hereafter abbreviated as "S."]) or are chosen as wives to produce children (e.g.,

Enn. *Trag.* 97; 120 R.²⁻³ = 126; 136 W. = 112; 132 J. = 35; 44 *TrRF*; Pac. *Trag.* 68 R.²⁻³ = 50 W. = 53 S.). Any unusual features of these typical aspects of a woman's life may be mentioned.¹³ Cicero, who quotes some of the relevant texts, confirms that both comedies and tragedies could contain descriptions of indecent situations. He also reports a clever argument of the Stoics denying that there is such a thing as "obscene or indecent language," on the grounds that any such thing can reside only either in the "matter" (*res*) or in the "language" (*verbum*). Indecent events described in nonexplicit terms are thus not offensive in either matter or language. Hence their presence in drama is justified (Cic. *Fam.* 9.22.1-2).

A young woman may be described as beautiful (e.g., Naev. *Trag.* 3 R.²⁻³ = 3 W. = 11 *TrRF*); women seem to be restricted in their movements (e.g., Naev. *Trag.* 7 R.²⁻³ = 12 W. = 8 *TrRF*); they may be seen as prototypically bad characters (Liv. Andron. *Trag.* 1 R.²⁻³ = 1 W. = 1 *TrRF*) or as particularly effective tricksters (Acc. *Trag.* 27-28 R.²⁻³ = 10-11 W. = 304-5 D.).¹⁴ Women appearing on stage can be talked about and addressed generically (e.g., "woman" = *mulier*) or with reference to a particular role (e.g., "queen" = *regina* [Acc. *Trag.* 439 R.²⁻³ = 417 W. = 537 D.]; "only daughter" = *gnata unica* [Acc. *Trag.* 299-300 R.²⁻³ = 284-85 W. = 598-99 D.]).

Some of these statements suggest that not only were women described by their roles, but that they and their characteristics might also be referred to in a derogatory or even misogynistic fashion. The most obvious example of the possibility of such an attitude in Republican tragedy is the statement that forms the title of this chapter. It comes from a tragedy by Pacuvius (c. 220-130 BCE) and reads (without the question mark): *haut facul . . . femina <una> invenitur bona* ("it is not easy to find just one good woman," Pac. *Trag. inc.* LIV R.²⁻³ = 35 W. = 261 S.). That this sententious line met with interest among contemporaries is indicated by the fact that it survives as a quotation by the *togata* poet Afranius (*fl.* c. 160-120 BCE), who quotes it in his Roman comedy *Auctio* with explicit attribution to Pacuvius: "as Pacuvius says" (Afran. *Tog.* 7 R.²⁻³ = 9 Dav.: *haut facul, ut ait Pacuvius, femina <una> invenitur bona*).¹⁵

Such a statement was probably not an isolated instance, as another comment on women in tragedy by a character in a comedy suggests: Plautus has the parasite Curculio say in the comedy named after him: "I have heard that an old poet has written in a tragedy that two women are worse than one" (Plaut. *Curc.* 591-92: *antiquom poetam audiui scripsisse in tragoedia / mulieres duas peiores esse quam unam*).¹⁶ Comic poets often exaggerate, yet a remark such as the following one (apparently about Eriphyla, from an unidentified tragedy), though triggered by the myth, can be read as a general condemnation of characteristics of women: "the race of women is avaricious . . . she sold her husband's life for gold."¹⁷ The two

terms for “woman” occurring in tragic fragments (*femina* and *mulier*) are generally neutral, but *mulier* may take on pejorative connotations; hence the choice of this word in a negative context may not be coincidental.¹⁸

A traditional prejudice that women are less courageous and more fearful than men comes to the fore in another fragment from an unidentified tragedy: “for you, young men, bear a womanish spirit, while this maiden bears the spirit of a man.”¹⁹ What is noteworthy here is the contrast: the speaker apparently accepts that there are certain ways of behavior typically associated with men and women respectively, but also that they are not inextricably linked to either sex. Instead, representatives of either sex can take on features of the other: what is criticized is the behavior of these men in contrast with the young woman in question, who, on the other hand, shows a manly disposition.

These general aspects of the description of the position and characteristics of women in early Roman tragedy likely stem from the adopted framework of mythical stories and conventional assumptions about women, though some intriguing ways of putting this material to good effect within the Roman framework have already surfaced. Yet before further conclusions on the representation and role of women in Roman Republican tragedy can be drawn, a sampling of female protagonists in the five major tragic poets of the Republican period needs to be examined more closely.

Generally, mythical characters of either sex bear no direct relation to the everyday life of contemporary audiences even in Greece.²⁰ They are even further removed in Rome: for a Roman audience, the adventures and experiences of these protagonists take place in a different country, time, and society. This arrangement creates both difficulties and opportunities for playwrights: since direct identification with characters, actions, or circumstances shown on stage is impossible, poets will not be disposed to aim for a reflection of “reality.” Therefore, what they present on stage may be more paradigmatic in a positive or negative way. Accordingly, it is a plausible assumption that in representing traditional female or male characters, early Roman dramatists portrayed general patterns of behavior.

Because of the limited number of fragments preserved for the two earliest tragic poets in Rome, it is hard to make precise statements about their representation of women. It is noteworthy, however, that both Livius Andronicus (c. 280/70–200 BCE) and Naevius (c. 280/60–200 BCE) wrote tragedies titled *Danae*, that Livius Andronicus possibly increased the number of female characters in *Tereus* and thus their opposition to male oppression (see discussion later in the chapter), and that it is mainly tragedies about myths outside the popular Trojan cycle that are named for women.

The picture becomes more differentiated with the subsequent tragic poets, Ennius (239–169 BCE), Pacuvius (c. 220–130 BCE), and Accius (170–c. 80 BCE), for whom more material is available. The plays of these dramatists exemplify both general tendencies in the development of tragedy at Rome and each poet's specific characteristics. A convenient way of illustrating this pattern is to look at representations of Medea, supplemented by a few other examples.²¹ From each of these three dramatists a Medea tragedy is extant: Ennius's *Medea (exul)*,²² Pacuvius's *Medus*, and Accius's *Medea sive Argonautae*, each of the three presenting a different segment of the story.

Ennius's *Medea (exul)* is generally regarded as being modeled on Euripides's play of the same title, on the basis of the similarity of some fragments to passages in Euripides and Cicero's testimony (Cic. *Fin.* 1.4). This derivation is certainly correct for the basic plot, although Ennius seems to have modified not only language and style but also details of character portrayal and background information.

Among the remaining fragments is an extract from Medea's speech to the women of Corinth.²³ Although it is unclear whether the description of the addressees is a line by Ennius or a paraphrase by Cicero, who quotes these verses (Cic. *Fam.* 7.6.1),²⁴ the address "women of Corinth" in Euripides (Eur. *Med.* 214: Κορίνθιαι γυναῖκες) has become in Ennius an elaborate *captatio benevolentiae*, in which the women are described as typical Roman ladies of the well-to-do nobility, as they are called "matrons" (*matronae*) who are "wealthy" (*opulenta*) and "noble / aristocratic" (*optumata*). In her subsequent explanation of why she should not be reproached for being away from her own country, Medea contrasts looking well after one's own business and that of the state (*res publica*) while being away from one's country (*patria*) with sitting at home. With its politically colored language, this comparison does not exactly match the situation of the mythical Medea but is rather a quintessentially Roman opposition and particularly apt to Rome's growing empire.²⁵ Hence it makes sense that Cicero uses these lines in a letter to Trebatius, urging him to carry on with his business while away from Rome (Cic. *Fam.* 7.6).

Medea famously compares the hardships facing men and women respectively, when she says, in Ennius's version, that she "would prefer to risk her life thrice under arms than give birth just once."²⁶ This remark shows that she is aware of the position of women, though she presents it, at least under certain circumstances, as more difficult and challenging than that of men. Euripides's Medea makes a similar comparison but speaks of "standing by the shield" (Eur. *Med.* 250–51). Hence Ennius's Medea both expresses explicitly a greater readiness to risk one's life in battle, as was expected of a Roman soldier, and enhances the notion of women's ordeals in giving birth.

In another fragment, presumably coming from this tragedy and most likely from her encounter with Creon, Medea ponders further plans and coolly asserts that she would not use such “sweetness of speech” (*blandiloquentia*, a rare word) were it not for some purpose.²⁷ While in Plautus the use of *blandimenta* to manipulate others is associated particularly with women,²⁸ here it refers to a way of speaking: Ennius has Medea use rhetorical techniques with a clear purpose in mind and argue for her position like a man in public life, with particular emphasis on the mode of speech. A similar style characterizes the rest of her argument. Hence it is no surprise that, again, Cicero uses these lines (Cic. *Nat. D.* 3.65–68): he quotes them as an example of reasoning and points out that Medea lacked neither *scelus* (crime) nor *ratio* (reasoning).

Cicero obviously regards Medea’s argument as effective, even though he disapproves of her deeds, and he considers it paradigmatic and worth discussing just as the arguments, observations, and behavior of male characters in drama (e.g., Cic. *De Or.* 2.155; *Rep.* 1.30; *Tusc.* 2.48–50; *Div.* 1.131; *Nat. D.* 3.72–73; 3.79–80). The case of Medea is followed by the examples of Atreus and Thyestes in Accius’s *Atreus* (Cic. *Nat. D.* 3.68–69). Although the basic plot of Euripides’s tragedy has been kept, Ennius’s representation of Medea (its effectiveness is confirmed by its reception in antiquity) characterizes her as a strong woman governed by values that apply equally to men in Rome.

Similar figures can be found elsewhere in Ennius’s tragedies and also in his epic.²⁹ In the tragedy *Andromacha*, the title figure delivers a *canticum* dealing with her situation after the fall of Troy. This speech apparently became so famous that on various occasions Cicero expects his audience to recall all of it when prompted by the mention of a few memorable lines (Cic. *Tusc.* 3.44; *De Or.* 3.102).³⁰ In connection with his most complete quotation of these lines, Cicero admires the power of these words and the way in which they show that what is sudden and unexpected is harder to bear (Cic. *Tusc.* 3.44–45).³¹ In this speech Andromache bewails her condition, as she is bereft of everything, above all her city and country as well as its altars and temples (Enn. *Trag.* 75–88 R.^{2–3} = 95–108 W. = 81–94 J. = 23 *TrRF*). The items whose loss Andromache bemoans are relevant for a Roman home; the terminology is likely to resonate with a Roman audience (*arx, urbs, arae, fana, pater, patria, domus*).

Andromache is again presented as a strong character, whose actions are seen in relation to men, when it is said in the play: “He who gave Andromacha [‘man fighter’] the name gave it correctly” (Enn. *Trag.* 65 R.^{2–3} = 109 W. = 99 J. = 25 *TrRF*). Varro criticizes this remark, since he thinks that, though it makes sense in Euripides’s Greek tragedy, it does not in the Latin version because the reference point of the etymology is not made explicit.³² However, there is no extant parallel

in any Greek play about Andromache, and apart from the fact that Ennius might have wished to explain the name to his audience (as he does with the name “Argo” in his *Medea*), this line indicates that Andromache’s strength was commented on. It seems, therefore, that women in Ennius’s tragedies may have served to embody and represent traditional male virtues.³³

In Pacuvius there are several women who help to avenge injustices and/or return the social and political situation to something justified and legitimate. Among them is Iliona, daughter of Priam and wife of the Thracian king Polymnestor, in the tragedy named for her, the plot of which can be recovered with the help of the narrative in Hyginus (Hyg. *Fab.* 109) and some remaining fragments (since there is no known Greek model): during the Trojan War Iliona had been asked to bring up Priam’s son (and her brother) Polydorus, which she did, disguising him as her own son, Diphilus, by exchanging the boys. After the fall of Troy, Polymnestor was induced to kill “Polydorus,” that is, his own son. When the surviving real Polydorus learned of the events, he and Iliona took revenge on Polymnestor and presumably instated Polydorus as ruler. It is clear from the plot that Iliona did not just have the function of keeping Polydorus alive, but that she actively carried out the deception and later triggered the revenge, and it is likely that the tragedy mainly covered the latter part of the story. One fragment suggests that Iliona feels supported by the gods in her plans.³⁴ Although there is overlap with the Polydorus myth as told in Euripides’s *Hecuba*, the different version in Pacuvius reinforces the woman’s role in taking revenge and shows a woman acting strategically and for the benefit of her dynasty.

Pacuvius’s *Medus*, which dramatizes a later section of the Medea story than Ennius’s *Medea*, illustrates a similar situation. Again the plot can be recovered with the help of Hyginus (Hyg. *Fab.* 26; 27) and some remaining fragments: Medus, Medea’s son, was left stranded on the coast of Colchis while seeking his mother. Perses, the brother of Medea’s deposed father, Aeetes, and current king, who had been told to beware of Aeetes’s descendants, captured him; hence Medus pretended to be Hippotes, Creon’s son. Nevertheless, Perses imprisoned Medus/“Hippotes.” When the land was subsequently gripped by famine, Medea arrived on a winged chariot and pretended to be a priestess of Diana and hence able to expiate the dearth. When she learned that Perses had imprisoned “Hippotes,” she feared that the young man might have come to take revenge on her. Hence she told Perses that he was Medus (without knowing this was true) and persuaded Perses to let her kill Medus. When Medea and Medus were brought together, they recognized each other; they avenged the injustice done to Medus’s grandfather Aeetes, and power over the kingdom passed to Medus.

It is obvious that Medea has an important part in rectifying power relations and bringing about reconciliation within her family. Among the remaining fragments, her almost supernatural status becomes apparent when she arrives on a winged chariot,³⁵ is greeted by the chorus, and described as the most beautiful of women.³⁶ In an encounter with her father, Aeetes, plausibly attributed to the end of this play, Medea is shown as a strong character who explains her past behavior and is ready to face the consequences. Although she admits that she left her father earlier, since she had “this husband, whom Amor had given [to her], who has more power and strength than a father,” she affirms at the same time: “When everybody sought you out with the kingdom in full bloom, I left you; now that you have been deserted by everybody, I alone, in greatest danger, am preparing to restore you.”³⁷ Here Medea takes on a heroic role that could equally be adopted by male kinsmen. These statements were taken up by Cicero and the Author to Herennius and discussed as examples of argument (Cic. *Inv. Rhet.* 1.90; *Rhet. Her.* 2.40); evidently these writers accepted a capacity for rational argument in women as well, which may be influenced by the representation of women in the source texts.

In Pacuvius manliness and moral values as such are not highlighted to the same extent as they are in Ennius: his women are strong characters fighting for justice and legitimate rule, like their male counterparts in other stories, while their loyalty toward their own families agrees with Roman social expectations of *pietas*. The people who cause women to suffer in Pacuvius are both male and female; the latter category includes Dirce, who plans to punish Antiopa, in Pacuvius’s *Antiopa* (cf. Hyg. *Fab.* 8). This prevents a one-dimensional picture and further suggests that the range of types for women is as wide as that for men.

In Accius Medea is shown in a different situation again, since this play, as its title *Medea sive Argonautae* suggests, deals with an earlier phase of the Medea story, the return journey of the Argo. Only a few fragments referring to Medea have been preserved, but the story is clear from what remains and from other sources such as Apollonius Rhodius’s epic *Argonautica*: Medea saves Jason, the Argonauts, and the Golden Fleece by betraying her family; when the Argo is pursued by the Colchians, she traps her brother Apsyrtus and eventually has him killed. Someone, who must be Aeetes, bemoans being “orphaned of children by swift and pestiferous death.”³⁸ The plural “children” is strange, but what the line emphasizes is that Medea’s collaboration with the enemy has disrupted familial bonds. Similarly, a description of Medea’s deeds toward her father and brother in an unidentified tragedy suggests that a woman can make her entire family suffer.³⁹

Generally, conflicts in Accius tend to be internal, within the family, or concerning couples, a pattern consistent with the prominent role of genealogy in

Accius's work. The greater number of plays known for Accius than for the other Republican tragic poets and his preference for family stories result in a more differentiated spectrum of female characters.

In Accius's *Tereus* the sisters Procne and Philomela take revenge on Tereus. In one of the fragments Tereus is described as of "barbarian mind," "mad by burning love," and as having "committed the vilest deed out of madness."⁴⁰ Another fragment affirms that a woman, following the custom of many of her sex, initiates forceful action against a man's dignity.⁴¹ This remark might indicate that one or both of the sisters take the step of confronting a man, an act that again serves the cause of justice.

To judge from the scanty fragments, the position of the women may have been different from Livius Andronicus's *Tereus*, if that play indeed followed the plot given in Hyginus's narrative, according to which the sisters are brought together by their friend, Queen Laethusa, and thereafter plot together against Tereus (Hyg. *Fab.* 45).⁴² However, women in Accius are not relegated to passive roles: in unusual situations they become active and defend themselves. In Accius's *Antigona*, for instance, women take center stage: the play maintains the contrast between two female characters as in Sophocles, one of them attempting to violate convention and bury her brother, the other being afraid of the consequences.⁴³ According to Macrobius (*Sat.* 6.2.17), what was said to Antigone in Accius influenced the words of King Latinus in Vergil's *Aeneid* (Verg. *Aen.* 12.19–21): that it was a woman who spoke these lines was apparently not an obstacle to transferring the notion to a male speaker. Concern for individuals who take rash steps in the view of others transcends sex boundaries.

That women in Republican tragedies could embody exemplary Roman behavior, just as men did, can be corroborated by a look at the other form of serious drama in Rome, plays dealing with events from Roman history (*fabulae praetextae*). At least three of the *praetextae* of which title and/or content are known featured women: in Ennius's *Sabinae* a group of women is mentioned in the title, and the play must have dramatized the famous story of the rape of the Sabine women and their intervention in the ensuing battle between their old and their new kin (Enn. *Praet.* 5–6 R.^{2–3} = *Trag.* 379–80 W.).⁴⁴ A *Brutus*, by Accius or by Cassius, included Lucretia and told the story of the expulsion of the last king and the beginning of the Republic in Rome (Varro, *Ling.* 6.7: Acc. [Cass.] *Praet.* 41 R.² = Acc. *Praet.* 41 R.³ = 39 W. = *Trag.* 675 D.).⁴⁵ A *praetexta* about the reasons for the rites at the Nonae Caprotinae must have included a trick by female slaves that helped to save Rome in a battle against the Latins after the Gallic catastrophe in 387 BCE (Varro, *Ling.* 6.18).⁴⁶

In all cases women, on their own or as a group, play essential roles in the early phases of Roman history, contributing to establishing or defending Rome. Accordingly their deeds are commemorated and appreciated like those of men such as Brutus, Decius, and Paulus in other plays. This pattern would suggest that if women had a major function according to Roman tradition, there was no problem giving them a central role in the drama in the same way as it was given to men. Something similar applies to the characters of Dido (presumably) in Naevius's epic *Bellum Poenicum* and of Ilia in Ennius's epic *Annales* (Naev. *Bell. Poen.* 19–20 W. = fr. 20 *FPL*⁴; Enn. *Ann.* 32–48; 49–50; 52; 53–54; 56 W. = 34–50; 58–59; 60; 61–62; 56 Sk.) and to women such as Lucretia in the early books of Livy's history as well as in Cicero (e.g., Liv. 1.57–59; Cic. *Fin.* 2.66; 5.64): here too women important for Roman history are depicted in full, and their distinctive contributions are made clear.⁴⁷ Again, the representation of powerful women might have been facilitated by the fact that the stories are set in Rome's mythical past and not in contemporary Rome; still, these women can function as examples for a type of behavior beneficial to themselves and to the community.

Looking back at the examples surveyed, it is evident that there are various aspects and functions of women in Roman Republican tragedy: on the one hand, there are explicit statements about women's characteristics and social roles, which reflect common stereotypes regarding the position of women in a community and may present women rather negatively. On the other hand, there are women who act as main characters and who are exemplary, whether in a positive or a negative way, like male protagonists; the potential to fulfill such roles seems to be acknowledged irrespective of sex. Thus women too can act in ways that either conform to or are exceptional in contemporary society.⁴⁸

Such representations would not encourage women in the audience (who could apparently attend performances in Rome: cf., e.g., Plaut. *Poen.* 28–35) to aim at becoming a Medea, the quintessential fierce character (cf. Hor. *Ars P.* 123; *Medea ferox invictaque*), or an Antigone any more than men were expected or encouraged to become an Atreus or an Agamemnon. Men and women on stage, rather, represented paradigmatic modes of behavior that could be models or negative foils for anyone's actions. Cicero accepts the conduct and utterances of all stage characters as equally paradigmatic and as relevant to ordinary Romans (e.g., Cic. *Planc.* 59; *Rab. Post.* 29; *Sest.* 102). Characters in Greek myth in particular can take on paradigmatic status because of the significant differences between the mythical world depicted on stage and contemporary Roman society.⁴⁹

At the same time the specific characterization of women in Roman tragedies makes such a transfer possible, since the positive figures are shown to possess

characteristics important to Romans, which could apply to the lives of ordinary Romans, and their concerns and language coincide with contemporary society and politics.⁵⁰ That female characters may take on such functions agrees with the more liberal attitude toward women in Roman society, where they were expected to pass on cultural values and civic virtues to their children.⁵¹

These details suggest that Roman Republican playwrights adopted female characters and their basic portrayal from Greek tragedies and the underlying myths; hence they have neutral or even misogynistic statements on the position and characteristics of women, ordinary female characters, and strong women who are protagonists. However, in the details of the depiction of particular women, the poets often applied a contemporary system of values. Hence they portrayed women as positive or negative paradigmatic figures, just as they did with men, representing values and modes of behavior directly applicable to Roman society. This pattern implies that, from a Roman perspective, characters in early Roman tragedies could include both *feminae malae* and *feminae bonae*!

NOTES

1. For overviews of scholarship, methodologies applied, and issues addressed, see, e.g., Foley 2001, 3–18; and Wohl 2005.
2. The only study specifically devoted to women in Republican tragedy seems to be N. W. Slater's article on women in Accius (2002).
3. For discussions of Roman Republican tragedy, see Erasmo 2004 (cf. Cowan 2005; Leigh 2006; Goldberg 2007, 580); Schiesaro 2005; Boyle 2006 (cf. Goldberg 2007, 580–82); Goldberg 2007; Manuwald 2011, 133–40; bibliography also in Manuwald [2001] 2004; for brief portraits of the respective poets (with testimonia and bibliography), see relevant entries in Suerbaum 2002 (cf. Gildenhard 2003; Feeney 2005; Goldberg 2007, 575) and sections in Manuwald 2011.
4. For quotations of tragic fragments from the Republican period, the numberings of Ribbeck's second and third editions (1871; 1897 [hereafter abbreviated as "R.², R.³"]), of Warmington's bilingual edition (1935; 1936 [hereafter abbreviated as "W."]), of *Tragicorum Romanorum Fragmenta* (2012 [hereafter abbreviated as "*TrRF*"]), and of modern special editions (where applicable) are given (and occasionally references to the transmitting author), similarly for comic fragments. The texts reprinted in the chapter have mostly been taken from Ribbeck or from editions of the transmitting authors.
5. For further details, see, e.g., Foley 2001, 6; Wohl 2005, 146.
6. The issue of whether (or how) early Roman playwrights "translated" Greek plays is heavily contested. Modern *communis opinio* seems to move toward assuming free adaptations and poetic decisions on the part of Roman dramatists rather than literal translations and close imitation (for an overview of the relationship to "models" with reference to Plautus, see Danese 2002; contrast Lennartz 1994).

7. Cf. Livius Andronicus: at least three; Naevius: three; Ennius: at least six; Pacuvius: six; Accius: ten tragedies. Since in some cases it is uncertain whether plays attributed to a poet are spurious and whether titles refer to one or two plays (see n. 22 below), the figures are not definitive, but they still give an indication of relative numbers.

8. This is inferred from titles naming groups of women or, in the case of Naevius's *Lycurgus*, from a fragment mentioning Bacchae (Naev. *Trag.* 34–35 R.² = 31–32 R.³ = 33–34 W. = 32 *TrRF*).

9. Female priestesses or seers were not uncommon in either Greece or Rome and also appear in tragedies: the figure of Cassandra (presumably in Ennius's *Alexander*) is a prime example. When Cassandra explains her predicament to her mother, she addresses her respectfully and thus assigns an honored position to her: "Mother, woman much better than the best of women" (Enn. *Trag.* 41 R.^{2–3} = 59 W. = 34 Jocelyn 1967 [hereafter abbreviated as "J."] = 151.3 *TrRF*: *mater optumarum multo mulier melior mulierum*).

10. Cic. *Tusc.* 2.36 (*Trag. inc. inc.* 205–8 R.^{2–3} = 29–32 W. = 54 *TrRF*): *itaque illi, qui Graeciae formam rerum publicarum dederunt, corpora iuvenum firmari labore voluerunt; quod Spartiatae etiam in feminas transtulerunt, quae ceteris in urbibus mollissimo cultu 'parietum umbris occultuntur'. illi autem voluerunt 'nihil horum simile esse apud Lacaenas virgines, / quibus magis palaestra, Eurotas, sol, pulvis, labor, / militia studio est quam fertilitas barbara'.*

11. See esp. *Trag. inc.* 131 R.^{2–3} = 135 W. = 86 *TrRF*: *virginem me quondam invitam per vim violat Iuppiter* (when I was a virgin, once upon a time, Jupiter raped me by force against my will).

12. See Enn. *Trag.* 54–56 R.^{2–3} = 73–75 W. = 47–49 J. = 151.16–18 *TrRF*: *eheu, videte! / iudicavit inclutum iudicium inter deas tris aliquis: / quo iudicio Lacedaemonia mulier, Furiarum una, adveniet*. (Oh, look! Someone has made a well-known judgment between three goddesses: as a consequence of this judgment a woman of Lacedaemon, one of the Furies, will come.); Enn. *Trag.* 194–96 R.^{2–3} = 232–34 W. = 204–6 J. = *Adesp.* 124 *TrRF*: *ego proiec-tor quod tu peccas: tu delinquis, ego arguor? / pro malefactis Helena redeat, virgo pereat inno-cens? / tua reconcilietur uxor, mea necetur filia?* (I am criticized because you commit a sin: you have done wrong, I am accused? For her misdeeds Helen shall come back, the innocent maiden shall die? Your wife shall be reconciled, my daughter be killed?); Naev. *Trag.* 6 R.² = 5 R.³ = 10–11 W. = 10 *TrRF*: *eam nunc esse inventam probris compotem scis* (you know that she has now been found also to be responsible for indecencies).

13. Cf. *Trag. inc. inc.* 128–29 R.^{2–3} = 131–32 W. = 84 *TrRF*: *quae mulier una . . . usurpat duplex cubile* (who, being one woman, . . . has access to a twofold bed); 130 R.^{2–3} = 133–34 W. = 85 *TrRF*: *huius †ferei† / hic cubile inire est ausus* (he dared to enter her bed . . .); Acc. *Trag.* 474 R.^{2–3} = 476 W. = 189 Dangel 1995 (hereafter abbreviated as "D."): *sed quem mihi iungent? cui, quae cum illo fuerim, dignabor dari?* (But to whom will they join me in wed-lock? Of whom will I, who has been together with that man, be regarded worthy?); Acc. *Trag.* 656 R.^{2–3} = Acc. *Trag. inc.* 34 W. = 701 D.: *mulier una duum virorum* (one woman of two men).

14. The Latin fragment from Accius's *Aegisthus* sounds like a neutral or even positive statement about the abilities of women in its transmitted form (*melius quam viri / callent mulieres* = "better than men do women know"). If, however, it is compared with the likely

Greek model, it acquires the opposite meaning (Aesch. *Ag.* 1636: τὸ γὰρ δολῶσαι πρὸς γυναικὸς ἦν σαφὲς = “deceiving was clearly the part of a woman”).

15. On the text, see Daviault 1981 and Schierl 2006 ad loc. Interestingly, the statement is attributed to the poet Pacuvius rather than to a character in one of his tragedies: either the poet is seen as the person who has put it into the mouth of a character, or the line may come from a prologue detached from the plot (on this quotation, see Zorzetti 1973).

16. The monologue continues (Plaut. *Curc.* 593–95): *verum mulierem peiorem quam haec amica est Phaedromi / non vidi neque audivi, neque pol dici nec fingi potest / peior* (Indeed, a worse woman than this girlfriend of Phaedromus’s I have never seen nor heard of, nor can a worse one, by god, be spoken of or envisaged). Another commonly cited Plautine passage makes no reference to tragedy and is not an actual misogynistic remark, but is rather a statement suited to the context for the purposes of comic effect (Plaut. *Merc.* 510–13): **LYS.** *bona si esse veis, bene erit tibi.* **PAS.** *tum pol ego perii misera. /* **LYS.** *qui?* **PAS.** *quia illim unde huc advecta sum, malis bene esse solitumst. /* **LYS.** *quasi deicas nullam mulierem bonam esse.* **PAS.** *haud equidem deico, / nec mos meust ut praedicem quod ego omnis scire credam.* (**LYS.** If you care to be a good girl, you will do well. **PAS.** Then, o dear, I am undone, poor me. **LYS.** How? **PAS.** Since in that place from where I was brought here the bad girls used to do well. **LYS.** This is as if you said that there is no good woman. **PAS.** I do not say this, and it is not my custom to announce something that I believe all know.)

17. *Trag. inc. inc.* 143–44 R.^{2–3} = 25–26 W. = 12 *TrRF* (Cic. *Inv. Rhet.* 1.94): *mulierum genus avarumst mulierum . . . auro vendidit viri vitam.*

18. This could also be the case for the following Ennian fragment: “Woman: what could I say that is more appropriate and truer than ‘woman?’” (Enn. *Trag.* 390 R.^{2–3} = 417 W. = 373 J. = 180 *TrRF*: *mulierem: quid potius dicam aut verius quam mulierem?*) But the lack of context makes the force of the term *mulier* here uncertain. On the use and meaning of the terms *femina* and *mulier* in the contemporary comedies of Plautus, see Santoro L’Hoir 1992, 30–33.

19. *Trag. inc. inc.* 210 R.^{2–3} = 33 W. = 79 *TrRF* (Cic. *Off.* 1.61): *vos enim iuvenes animum geritis muliebre, illa virgo viri.* Cf. Acc. *Trag.* 105/106 R.^{2–3} = 78 W. = 386 D.: *muliebre ingenium, prolubium, occasio* (womanish spirit, lust, opportunity).

20. See, e.g., Foley 2001, 3.

21. Some of these plays and characters have been discussed before (in addition to translations, commentaries, and the relevant sections in Ribbeck 1875), albeit not specifically in view of the “representation of women”: on Ennius’s *Medea*, see, e.g., Jocelyn 1967, 342–82; Arcellaschi 1990, 37–99; Classen (1992) 1993, 64–71; Lennartz 1994, 167–266 passim; Vogt-Spira 2000; Lefèvre 2001; Boyle 2006, 71–78 (bibliography in Manuwald [2001] 2004, 141–44; Suerbaum 2003, 220); on Pacuvius’s *Medus* see, e.g., Arcellaschi 1990, 101–61; Schierl 2002, 272–77; 2006, 342–85 (bibliography in Manuwald [2001] 2004, 172–73; Schierl 2006, 353); on Accius’s *Medea*, see, e.g., Arcellaschi 1990, 163–95; Schierl 2002, 277–83 (bibliography in Manuwald [2001] 2004, 205–7; on *Medea* in Latin literature, see also Manuwald 2013); on Ennius’s *Andromacha*, see, e.g., Jocelyn 1967, 234–61 (bibliography in Manuwald [2001] 2004, 134–35; Suerbaum 2003, 219); on Pacuvius’s *Iliona*, see, e.g.,

Manuwald 2000; Schierl 2006, 312–41 (bibliography in Manuwald [2001] 2004, 171; Schierl 2006, 320); on Accius's *Tereus*, see, e.g., Degl'Innocenti Pierini 2002; Boyle 2006, 133–37; Slater 2002, 290–93 (bibliography in Manuwald [2001] 2004, 215).

22. On the title(s) and number of Ennius's play(s) about Medea, see Jocelyn 1967, 342–46; Arcellaschi 1990, 48–58. What will be discussed here are fragments belonging to a Medea play along the lines of Euripides's *Medea*.

23. Cic. *Fam.* 7.6.1–2 (Enn. *Trag.* 219–21 R.^{2–3} = 266–68 W. = 219–20 J. = 90.1–3 TrRF; cf. Eur. *Med.* 214–18): *tu modo ineptias istas et desideria urbis et urbanitatis depone et, quo consilio profectus es, id adsiduitate et virtute consequere. hoc tibi tam ignoscemus nos amici quam ignoverunt Medee quae Corinthum arcem altam habebant matronae opulentae optumates, quibus illa manibus gypsatisimis persuasit ne sibi vitio illae verterent quod abesset a patria. nam "multi suam rem bene gessere et publicam patria procul; / multi qui domi aetatem agerent propterea sunt improbiati." quo in numero tu certe fuisses, nisi te extrusissemus.* (You just get rid of these stupidities and the desire for the city and urban ways of life and carry on with the intention you set out with, with perseverance and strength. We, your friends, will pardon you for this, just as "the wealthy and noble matrons, who had the high citadel of Corinth" pardoned Medea, when she tried to persuade them, with whitened hands, not to regard it as a vice that she was away from her country. For "many have looked after their own affairs and those of the community well while away from their country; many who spent their life at home have been criticized because of this." Among this group you would certainly have been if we had not thrust you out.)

24. On this problem, see Jocelyn 1967, 358–59.

25. See also Classen (1992) 1993, 69; Boyle 2006, 74–75. Ennius's version of the opposition is therefore not a "severe misunderstanding of the original" (so Ribbeck 1875, 151: "grobes Missverständniss des Originals") but rather a deliberate change for a contemporary Roman audience.

26. Enn. *Trag.* 222–23 R.^{2–3} = 269–70 W. = 232–33 J. = 93 TrRF: *nam ter sub armis malim vitam cernere / quam semel modo parere.*

27. Enn. *Trag.* 226–27^b R.^{2–3} = 274–76 W. = 225–27 J. = *Adesp.* 71 TrRF: *nequaquam istuc istac ibit; magna inest certatio. / nam ut ego illi supplicarem tanta blandiloquentia / ni ob rem* (In no way will this move thence: there is great strife involved. For would I humble myself to beseech him with such sweetness of speech, if not for some purpose?); cf. Eur. *Med.* 368–69.

28. See Dutsch 2008, 56–60.

29. For a study of women in Ennius's *Annals*, see Keith 2007. In the same volume, Elliott makes an attempt at reading Ennius's *Annals* as an epic of several voices (analogous to interpretations of Vergil's *Aeneid*) and finds currents that display sympathy "for the underdogs of the Roman political establishment, such as women and Rome's military enemies" (2007, 38).

30. According to Zetzel (2007, 2–3), *Andromacha* and *Medea* are Cicero's "favourites" among Ennius' tragedies, and "two passages, the opening of the *Medea* and Andromache's lament, are cited respectively seven and eight times each."

31. Cic. Tusc. 3.45: *o poetam egregium, quamquam ab his cantoribus Euphorionis contemnitur. sentit omnia repentina et necopinata esse graviora. . . . praeclarum carmen. est enim et rebus et verbis et modis lugubre.* (O marvelous poet! Even though he is despised by these singers of Euphorion. He feels that all sudden and unexpected events are harder. . . . A wonderful song! For it is plaintive in subject matter, language, and tone.) On Cicero's treatment of the quotation in this passage, see Zetzel 2007, 4–6.

32. Varro, Ling. 7.82: *apud Ennium: "Andromachae nomen qui indidit recte indidit." item . . . imitari dum voluit Euripidem et ponere ἔτυμον est lapsus. nam Euripides quod Graeca posuit, ἔτυμα sunt aperta. ille ait ideo nomen additum Andromachae quod ἀνδρὶ μάχεται. hoc Enni quis potest intellegere in versu significare "Andromachae nomen quis indidit recte indidit" . . . ?* (In Ennius: "he who gave Andromacha ['man fighter'] the name gave it correctly." Likewise . . . While he wished to imitate Euripides and use an etymology, he made a slip. For since Euripides used the Greek, the etymologies are obvious. He says that the name was given to Andromacha for the reason that she fights against a man. Who can understand that in Ennius's verse "he who gave Andromacha the name gave it correctly" means this . . . ?)

33. This clashes with the virtues typically attributed to women (esp. modesty, chastity) in Republican Rome (see McDonnell 2006, 161–65).

34. Pac. Trag. 206–7 R.^{2–3} = 218–19 W. = 152 S.: *di me etsi perdunt, tamen esse adiutam expetunt, / quom prius quam intereo spatium ulciscendi danunt* (even if the gods destroy me, nevertheless they want me to be supported, since they give room for revenge before I perish).

35. Pac. Trag. 397 R.^{2–3} = 242 W. = 171 S.: *angues ingentes alites iuncti iugo* (enormous winged snakes joined under a yoke). Although the transmitting writers do not give the name of the poet or the title of the work for this fragment, its contents, in combination with the available information about Pacuvius's *Medus*, make its assignment to this tragedy very likely, which is widely accepted (cf. Schierl 2006 ad loc.).

36. Pac. Trag. 230–31 R.^{2–3} = 244–45 W. = 173 S.: *mulier egregissima / forma* (a woman of the most outstanding appearance); 232 R.^{2–3} = 247 W. = 174 S.: *caelitum camilla, expectata advenis: salve, hospita!* (Honorable offspring of the gods, you arrive much awaited: welcome, our guest!)

37. Trag. inc. inc. 174–75 R.^{2–3} = Pac. Trag. 260 W. = 185 S. = *Adesp. 62 TrRF: coniugem / illum, Amor quem dederat, qui plus pollet potiorque est patre*; Trag. inc. inc. 186–88 R.^{2–3} = Pac. Trag. 261–63 W. = 186 S. = *Adesp. 7 TrRF: cum te expetebant omnes florentissimo / regno, reliqui: nunc desertum ab omnibus / summo periculo sola ut restituam paro*. Again these two fragments are not explicitly assigned to Pacuvius's *Medus* by the transmitting writers, but because of their context the attribution is almost certain and is adopted by recent scholars (cf. Schierl 2006 ad loc.).

38. Acc. Trag. 421 R.^{2–3} = 410 W. = 497 D.: *pernici orbifcor liberorum leto et tabificabili*. For a discussion of various explanations of the plural, see Schierl 2002, 279–80.

39. Trag. inc. inc. 165–71 R.^{2–3} = 5–11 W. = 74 TrRF: *postquam pater / adpropinquat iamque paene ut comprehendatur parat, / puerum interea optruncat membraque articulatim dividit, / perque agros passim dispergit corpus: id ea gratia, / ut, dum nati dissipatos artus*

captaret parens, / ipsa interea effugeret, illum ut maeror tardaret sequi, / sibi salutem ut familiari pareret parricidio. (When the father approaches and is almost ready to seize her, she kills the boy in the meantime and carves up his limbs piece by piece, and she spreads the body everywhere over the fields: she did this for the purpose that, while the parent tried to catch the son's scattered limbs, she herself might flee in the meantime, that grief might delay him in his pursuit, that she brought salvation to herself by the murder of a family member.)

40. Acc. *Trag.* 636–39 R.^{2–3} = 639–42 W. = 439–42 D.: *Tereus indomito more atque animo barbaro / conspexit in eam; amore vecors flammeo, / depositus facinus pessimum ex dementia / confingit* (Tereus, a man of unrestrained character and barbarian mind, looked at her; mad by burning love, undone, he committed the vilest deed out of madness).

41. Acc. *Trag.* 647–48 R.^{2–3} = 643–44 W. = 448–49 D.: *video ego te, mulier, more multarum utier, / ut vim contendas tuam ad maiestatem viri* (I see that you, woman, follow the custom of many women, so that you strain your force against a man's dignity).

42. This is the standard view on the plot of Livius Andronicus's *Tereus* (see Ribbeck 1875, 35–40; Warmington 1936, 10–11), suggested mainly by the fact that in one fragment (with textual details disputed) someone seems to talk about the affair, stating their own position in front of someone, which indicates the involvement of another character and discussions about events (Liv. Andr. *Trag.* 28–29 R.^{2–3}: *credito, / cum illoc olli mea voluntate numquam limavit caput* = 25–26 W.: *credito / cum illo soror mea voluntate numquam limavit caput* = 18 TrRF: *credito / cum illos †soli† mea voluntate numquam limavit caput*). Warmington (op. cit.) translates the text adopted by him: “Believe me, with that man my sister has never rubbed heads with my consent.”

43. Acc. *Trag.* 135 R.^{2–3} = 87 W. = 576 D.: *quid agis? perturbas rem omnem ac resupinas, soror* (What are you doing? You are throwing the whole business into confusion and making it fall to pieces, sister); 136–37 R.^{2–3} = 88–89 W. = 577–78 D.: *quanto magis te isti modi esse intellego, / tanto, Antigona, magis me par est tibi consulere et parcere* (The more I understand you to be of this mind, the more, Antigona, is it right for me to care for you and spare you).

44. On this *praetexta* see Manuwald 2001, 172–79 (with references). Boyle (2006, 85–86) relates this play to the fact that “Rome's treatment of its women was a major political issue in both the final years of the Second Punic War and the first half of the second century BCE.”

45. On the attribution of the line to either Accius or Cassius and thus the existence of one or two *praetextae* titled *Brutus*, see Manuwald 2001, 237–43 (with references).

46. On the background of the Nonae Carpotinae festival and the rites developed from it, see Macr. *Sat.* 1.11.36–40; Plut. *Cam.* 33.3–8; *Rom.* 29.4–10. For a discussion of this play, see Manuwald 2001, 66–71 (with references).

47. On the presentation of women in Livy, see Kowalewski 2002.

48. See also Wohl (on Greek tragedy): “It is impossible, then, to view Euripides—or tragedy in general—as either ‘misogynist,’ blithely reproducing the gender stereotypes and inequalities of a sexist society, or ‘feminist,’ radically challenging those same stereotypes and inequalities. If tragedy as a genre has often seemed to sing a hymn of the female race (as

the chorus of Medea puts it), that hymn has remained difficult to interpret and its ambivalent message has been the object of much productive debate among feminist scholars” (2005, 146–47).

49. The Greek convention that all roles, including female ones, were played by male actors was retained for the Roman stage. At least in the late Republic those actors could excel in certain roles or prefer particular ones, for Cicero claims that those who trusted in their gesturing opted for the plays *Melanippa* and *Clytemnestra* and that Rupilius preferred *Antiopa* (Cic. *Off.* 1.114). It was only performances of mimes, which became institutionalized in the late Republic, that had female actors, giving rise to stories about licentiousness and sexual display at those performances (see esp. Val. Max. 2.10.8; Sen. *Ep.* 97.8; Mart. 1, *praef.*).

50. These findings basically agree with Slater’s result for Accius: “I hope our survey thus far, however, has sufficed to demonstrate one or two predominant tendencies in Accius’s composition of female characters. . . . Accius does not seem to have made these women more violent or bloodthirsty than their Greek originals. Even where traditional expressions about the lust, violence, and rebelliousness of women appear in the fragments, we can usually see another point of view reflected as well in other fragments. Moreover, the noble heroines have often acquired particularly Roman virtues in their translation to the Roman stage: devotion to a single husband, courage, independence, and even leadership. This Romanization certainly will have facilitated sympathy for, and to some extent even identification with, the women of Accius on the part of both men and women in the original audience. On the narrative level his heroines remain embedded in their original Greek myths, but their otherness has been subtly and regularly modified to begin to assimilate them into a Roman system of values and identities, just as Shakespeare’s noble Greeks and Romans to the values of his own time” (2002, 301–2).

51. See, e.g., Cantarella 1987, esp. 113–34.

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Part Three

Receptions



Machiavelli's *Mandragola* and the Logic of Seduction

VALERIA CINAGLIA and DAVID KONSTAN

Toward the end of Niccolò Machiavelli's brilliant comedy, the *Mandragola*, the protagonist emerges from the house of the married woman with whom he has just succeeded in spending the night and relates his joy to his companion, Ligurio, a parasite in the mold of Terence's Phormio. He quotes the woman's own words to explain why she surrendered to him: "Since your astuteness, my husband's stupidity, my mother's simplicity, and my confessor's wickedness have led me to do what I never would have done by myself, I'm determined to judge that it comes from a heavenly disposition which has so willed; and I don't have it in me to reject what Heaven wills me to accept. Therefore, I take you for lord, master, and guide; you are my father, my defender, and I want you to be my every good."¹ Although the hero bears the name Callimaco, and the heroine is called Lucrezia, both Italian adaptations of good classical names (his Greek, hers Latin, though neither occurs in what we know of ancient comedy), words like Lucrezia's cannot be found in any surviving comedy from classical antiquity—nor, we venture to say, was there anything like them in all the thousands of comedies that were composed in Greece and adapted in Rome. No woman in the genre of New Comedy, which is the style in which Machiavelli wrote his *Mandragola*, ever spoke like that. In this chapter, we explore why that should be so.

That a lover should crow about achieving the object of his desire is not unknown in Roman comedy. Something comparable occurs, for example, in Terence's *Eunuch*, which Machiavelli, like most of his erudite contemporaries, knew perfectly well. Indeed, before he wrote his masterpiece, the *Mandragola*, Machiavelli composed two adaptations of Latin comedies—*Andria*, which was a more or less faithful translation of Terence's play by that name—and *Clizia*, based on Plautus's

Casina. In the *Eunuch*, Chaerea emerges from the home of Thais, a courtesan, and declares in a soliloquy: "Is anyone here? No one. Did anyone follow me here? Nobody. Can I finally burst with joy? Jupiter! Now is the time when I can definitely accept dying, so that none of life's vicissitudes may contaminate this joy!" (549–52). At this point, Antipho, a friend of Chaerea, turns up and asks him the reason for his ecstasy, and why he is dressed in the gaudy outfit of a eunuch. Chaerea declares that there is no one he would rather see at this moment and takes the opportunity to recount the story. He had fallen in love with a girl who had been given into the possession of Thais, and in order to get near her he had taken the place of a eunuch who had been intended as a gift for the courtesan; once he had gotten inside Thais's establishment, the girl had been placed in his charge. When her attendants had left to bathe themselves, and the girl herself was half asleep, Chaerea, inspired by a painting of Jupiter entering the bedroom of Danae in the form of a rain of gold, had forced himself upon her. As he puts it: "Was I going to lose the opportunity that was handed to me, so great, so brief, so desired, so unexpected? I'd really be like the fellow I was pretending to be" (604–6; our translation). That he had raped the poor girl is made clear shortly afterward, when one of Thais's maids states explicitly that he had violated her (*vitiavit*, 654), and that the girl was weeping and ashamed to say what was wrong (659; cf. 829).

As it happens, Callimaco gains access to the home of Lucrezia by means of a disguise as well. In this case, the scheme is rather more complicated. In order to persuade Lucrezia's husband, Nicia, to open his house to a stranger and, what is more, allow him to enter the bed of his wife, Callimaco, at the suggestion of Ligurio, pretends to be a doctor and to be able to cure the ostensible infertility of Lucrezia (due really, the audience understands, to the aged Nicia's sterility, or perhaps his impotence). The putative remedy is a mandrake plant (from which the play takes its title), which is to be ingested by Lucrezia.² The drawback, however, is that the first man who makes love to her after she takes the potion will die. Naturally, Nicia does not wish to run the risk, and so it is agreed that he, with the help of Ligurio and some others, will abduct a young vagrant, introduce him into Lucrezia's chamber, and have him suffer the first, fatal effect of the drug. Callimaco masquerades as an itinerant lute player, and it is he whom Nicia, in his innocence, unites with his wife, whom he has persuaded, with great difficulty and only with the additional pressure exerted by Lucrezia's mother, Sostrata, and her confessor, Timoteo, to consent to the plan. Callimaco is apparently no longer dressed in this costume when he steps forth to recount to Ligurio his success, adding that he had suffered certain qualms on account of the ruse; subsequently, however, "I made myself known to her, and made her understand the love I bore for her, and how easily, on account of her husband's simplicity, we could live happily without any

scandal, promising her, whenever God did otherwise with him, to take her for my wife" (5.4). And with this, Lucrezia gives her consent, in the words quoted above.

There are crucial differences, nevertheless, between the scenes in the *Mandragola* and the *Eunuch*. For one thing, Lucrezia is a free, married woman, whereas the girl in Terence's play is a slave, or at all events this is what Chaerea believed when he assaulted her (858). In the end, she will turn out to be the daughter of Athenian citizens (now deceased), and the sister of a man named Chremes; Thais had grown up with the girl in Rhodes, as her foster sister, but moved to Athens; her lover, a mercenary soldier, has brought Pamphila to Thais, who intends to discover her true status. The rape, however, puts her plan in jeopardy, since Chremes may not wish to acknowledge a relationship to her if her reputation has been compromised (867–71). The problem is that, according to the conventions of New Comedy, a woman who has had sex out of wedlock is not ordinarily marriageable, and Chremes, as the original audience would have realized, will have little interest in reclaiming a long-lost sister who will merely be an added expense in his household. The way out of the dilemma would again have been obvious to the spectators: Chaerea declares that he acted out of love (*amor*, 877–78), and that he is prepared to take the girl as his wife (888); when Thais sensibly inquires whether his father will be agreeable to such a match, Chaerea assures her that he will, "provided that she is really a citizen" (890). In this, Terence takes advantage of a wrinkle in the rule about sex and marriage: a woman who has had extramarital sex, whether willingly, as in the case of courtesans, or under compulsion, as a result of rape, with one man only, may indeed marry the man who violated her—and him only. If the woman is a courtesan, accordingly, or living as a concubine with a man, the comedy will end in marriage between her and her lover if and only if she is a novice and this is her first sexual relationship, in which case she will be revealed to be a citizen after all, by the favored comic device of a recognition (examples are Menander's *Shorn Girl*, Plautus's *Cistellaria*, and Terence's *Self-Tormentor*). Girls who are known from the start to be free citizens, however, are never represented as the subjects of erotic desire in New Comedy—this is another law of the genre—and therefore do not have consensual sex. It follows that, where the plot revolves around a free girl who has had sex outside marriage, it must take the form not of a voluntary union but of rape, and in this case the recognition consists in the revelation that the man who violated her is in fact her suitor or, if the fact of the rape comes to light after marriage (by the birth of a child), her husband. Ugly as it is, the happy ending in comedies of this sort is the union of the rapist and his victim, as in Terence's *Eunuch* (other examples are Menander's *Woman of Samos*, Plautus's *Pot of Gold* and *Truculentus*, and Terence's *Brothers*; for rape disclosed after wedlock, Menander's *Arbitrants* and Terence's *Mother-in-Law*).

What is absent in the above scenarios of premarital sex, whether with a citizen virgin or with a professional courtesan, is seduction. The courtesan sells her favors, or if she is a slave and working in a brothel, then she has no choice but to submit to the customer (this is in reality another form of rape); in neither case is it a matter of amorous persuasion and consent, though a courtesan may be fond of a particular client (as Thais is of Chaerea's brother in the *Eunuch*). The free virgin, on the other hand, is typically very young and, as we have seen, is not represented as experiencing sexual desire. She is, moreover, entirely under the authority of her father or other male guardian and is not usually in a position even to speak with a man outside her immediate family. Here again, accordingly, there is no place for enticement. As a result, the figure of the seducer is absent from ancient New Comedy.

In this respect, then, the scene in Machiavelli's *Mandragola* is innovative in relation to the classical genre. Lucrezia is convinced to give her consent to sex, and this in two stages. First, she is browbeaten by her husband, mother, and confessor into agreeing to sleep with a complete stranger, who will, moreover, die as a result. Although their combined influence is powerful, the decision to comply rests with Lucrezia. As she says to her mother (act 3, scene 11): "What are you persuading me to do?" to which her mother replies: "Let yourself be persuaded, my daughter. Don't you see that a woman who has no children has no home?" Brother Timoteo adds his injunction, assuring her that the sin will be venial, and again, Lucrezia asks: "What are you leading me to, Padre?" Finally, Lucrezia declares: "I agree, but I don't believe that I shall be alive at all tomorrow morning." No woman in ancient comedy is subjected to such verbal pressure, and none submits to having illegitimate sex on such grounds. Nevertheless, this is not precisely a case of seduction, at least not in the full sense of the word. For seduction is not merely a matter of persuasion, which can be accomplished in a variety of ways, including threats, bribes, and appeals to practical interests, as Lucrezia's mother does. Seduction, however, subverts the will of the other party; the one who is seduced does not merely consent to having sex, but is induced actually to desire it. Thus, the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* offers as the first definition of "seduce" "to persuade to disobedience or disloyalty,"³ that is, to an alteration of the disposition of the seduced, by which the person is enticed to engage in sexual intercourse. In this sense, the seduction is achieved or completed in the second phase of the plot, after Lucrezia has done the deed and Callimaco has revealed his identity and professed his love for her and his determination to marry her as soon as it should become possible. To Ligurio, Callimaco adds: "And besides these true reasons, having tasted what a difference there is between my lying with her and Nicia's, and between the kisses of a young lover and those of an old husband," she has not only acquiesced to the relation,

but, as she puts it, "I take you for lord, master, and guide," adding that, henceforward, "we'll be able to come together at any time and without suspicion" (5.4). Lucrezia has shed her scruples about the affair and embraced it eagerly.⁴

There is a second respect in which the conclusion to the *Mandragola* differs from anything to be found in ancient comedy: nowhere is there a scene in Plautus or Terence, the models on whom Machiavelli drew (nor for that matter, in any other example of New Comedy, Greek or Roman, known today), in which a married woman has sex with a man who is not her husband—with one exception, to which we will come in a moment. There are only two cases in which the idea is even broached, to the best of our knowledge, and then only in a fictional or hypothetical form. One of these is in Plautus's *Braggart Soldier*, in which the title character is lured into entering the house of Periplectomenus, a citizen who lives next door, on the pretext that Periplectomenus's wife wants to have an affair with him. In fact, Periplectomenus is a confirmed bachelor, and he and his friends trick the soldier by hiring a courtesan to pretend to be his wife. The courtesan, moreover, assures the soldier that she is officially separated and that the property is hers (1165–68). The soldier is soundly trounced for intruding into the home of a citizen, but this is as close as comedy comes to representing an affair with a married woman. The other example is still more equivocal: in Plautus's *Bacchides*, a young lover concocts a scheme to extract money from his father by pretending that he has slept with the wife of a mercenary soldier, who will kill him if he does not pay up (851–61). Once again, the episode is entirely imaginary, and even so, it is a rare device in comedy.

There is one well-known example of adultery on the part of a woman in New Comedy—the exception alluded to above—that may be said to prove the rule, for it hardly counts as a case of true infidelity. This is Plautus's *Amphitruo*, in which Alcmena, the wife of Amphitruo and future mother of Hercules, sleeps not with another man but with Jupiter, a god. Here too, as in the *Eunuch* and the *Mandragola*, the lover adopts a disguise in order to gain access to the woman, but in this instance Jupiter assumes the identical shape of Amphitruo, so Alcmena is deceived into believing that she is sleeping with her husband and not with someone else. Indeed she delivers a speech in which she stoutly defends her virtue: clearly, her lapse was due to no weakening of her fidelity or will. This, then, is not strictly speaking a question of seduction; indeed, it is rather more like a rape. That this comedy takes its story from mythology (it is the only surviving comedy to do so, though comedies based on myth were not uncommon) no doubt renders the adultery more palatable, since it was essential to the legend that Hercules was the son of Jupiter; even so, Plautus identifies this play as a tragicomedy (this is the earliest occurrence of the term), that is, a mixture of tragedy and comedy, since it

features kings and gods (50–63, from the prologue)—and perhaps too because the theme is suited rather to the more sober genre (Euripides's *Ion* is the closest analogy). If, then, Machiavelli had the *Amphitruo* in mind as well as the *Eunuch* when he composed his *Mandragola*, he knew that he was representing, in Lucrezia, a different kind of woman than Alcmena.

Machiavelli created a female character of the bourgeois class who knowingly and deliberately enters into a sexual relationship with a man who is not her husband. This is novel, in relation to the genre in which Machiavelli was self-consciously writing, and it is significant. Lucrezia is granted an autonomy in the domain of love that in some ways represents a step forward for the genre, which had, as we have seen, imposed strict limits on the erotic subjectivity of women, with only courtesans being allowed a measure of independence in this arena. But this is not to say that Lucrezia acts with the same erotic initiative as the male protagonists of comedy. After all, she has to be seduced and puts up considerable resistance before she yields to the concerted pressure of everyone she trusts. Seduction implies contravening a standard of behavior that one has implicitly accepted and indeed may continue to recognize, even in the breach: this is why the act frequently involves secrecy and is conducted in such a way that, in Callimaco's words, the couple can "live happily without any scandal" (5.4).⁵ To put it another way, Lucrezia may be liberated by the end of the play, at least by a certain definition of freedom, but there is no corresponding change in the mores of society. It is the perfect formula for hypocrisy, at which Lucrezia proves herself adept, indeed, from the moment she accepts Callimaco as her lover, for as she says of her new behavior, "I'm determined to judge that it comes from a heavenly disposition which has so willed; and I don't have it in me to reject what Heaven wills me to accept." In other words, even as she chooses to comply with Callimaco's wishes and invents new possibilities for assignations, she evades full responsibility for her action by assigning the blame to heaven—a little like Chaerea, perhaps, in Terence's *Eunuch*, when he declares himself justified in raping a helpless girl because he is following the example of Jupiter. We shall return to this point in the sequel.

It is this feature of seduction that distinguishes Machiavelli's *Mandragola* not only from classical New Comedy but also from the ancient mime, a kind of short playlet that typically exploited more ribald themes than its more staid sister genre. Although no Latin examples of the form have survived (several learned versions by the Hellenistic poet Herodas, along with a few fragments of more-popular Greek mimes, were recovered on papyrus at the end of the nineteenth century), we know that one of the standard topics was adultery (it may be worth noting that in classical Latin, the term *adulterium* referred specifically to a sexual relationship with a married woman). Ovid describes it in *Tristia* 2, in which he defends his poetry

after having been exiled by Augustus (2.497–500, 505–6): “What if I had written mimes with their obscene jokes, which always contain a crime of forbidden love, in which a refined adulterer invariably marches on stage, and a cunning wife lies to her stupid husband . . . ? And when the lover has deceived the husband by some new ploy, he is applauded and the palm is awarded him to great applause.” It is generally agreed that the so-called tale of the tub, recounted in Apuleius’s *Metamorphoses* (or *Golden Ass*, 9.5–7) and subsequently adapted by Boccaccio in his *Decameron* (the tale of Peronella: seventh day, second story), was derived from a mime and gives a good idea of the kind of story favored by the genre. A wife has taken a lover, and when her husband unexpectedly returns home, she tells the lover to get inside a large ceramic jar and pretend that he is inspecting it, with a view to making a purchase. She then persuades her husband to climb inside and clean it properly, and while she leans over the lip to give him instructions, the lover enjoys her from behind. The wife is certainly unfaithful and a willing partner in the affair: amorous women were clearly familiar in the theater of Ovid’s time. But there is no reason to think that she was ever seduced. The dimension of moral conflict is absent from the genre of the mime.

At the beginning of the *Mandragola*, Callimaco explains to his servant, Siro, the origin of his passion for Lucrezia. For the past twenty years, he has been living in Paris, where his parents had sent him to avoid the turmoil consequent upon the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII of France. By chance, he had met an Italian countryman, one Cammillo Calfucci, who, in a friendly argument over whether French or Italian women were the more beautiful, mentioned the name of Lucrezia, the wife of Cammillo’s cousin Nicia, “and he spoke such praise for both her beauty and manners, that he left every one of us stupefied; and in me he awakened such a desire to see her that, leaving off every other deliberation . . . , I set out to see her” (act 1, scene 1). Having discovered that she exceeded Cammillo’s eulogy, he declares: “I am burning with such a desire to be with her, that I don’t know where I am.” In his desperation, Callimaco sends for Ligurio, and they gradually hit upon the stratagem of the mandragola, or mandrake, which will allow him to fulfill his hopes despite her husband’s precautions and her own nature, which, as he has learned, “is extremely honest and in all ways alien to the things of love.” Renaissance readers would instantly have recognized the allusion here to one of the most famous stories in Roman legend, recounted by Livy in the first book of his history of Rome: the rape of Lucretia, whose name Machiavelli borrowed for his comedy (in the *Mandragola*, Machiavelli uses stock names from Roman comedy only for Siro, a standard appellation for a slave, and for Sostrata, a common name for a married matron; Ligurio is built on the Latin word *ligurrio* or *ligurio*, which means to sponge off another person).⁶ The tale is set during the reign of Tarquin

the Proud, the last king or tyrant of Rome before the establishment of the Republic. In this version, several young noblemen fall to discussing the virtues of their wives at the home of Sextus Tarquinius, one of the king's sons, and when Tarquinius Conlatinus flatly declares that none is worthier than his Lucretia, they decide to put his claim to the test by dropping in on her unannounced. Upon seeing her chastely performing her housewifely chores, and as beautiful as she had been described, "there and then a vicious passion to violate Lucretia seized Sextus Tarquinius" (1.57.10). Some days later, Sextus returns at night to Lucretia's house, and after being hospitably received and on fire with love (*amor*), he enters her bedroom, puts a sword to her throat, and declares his love for her, mixing prayers with threats; finally, when he sees that she is steadfastly resisting even in the face of death, he says that he would in that case kill her and place the naked body of a slave beside her, spreading the report that she had been taken in an act of sordid adultery. With this, she yields to him. Immediately afterward, she summons her husband and her father, who arrive accompanied by Lucius Junius Brutus, and relates what has happened. Explaining that though her body has been violated, her mind is innocent, she demands that they avenge the insult, and with this slays herself, "so that no woman might ever live unchastely because of the example of Lucretia" (1.58.10). Brutus picks up the bloody knife and swears by it to liberate Rome from tyranny, which he does.

Machiavelli, who wrote a commentary on the first ten books of Livy and knew the work intimately, has cleverly and naughtily converted an exemplary tale of virtue into its opposite, a comedy of successful seduction. His Lucrezia retains the virtuous disposition of the Roman heroine but is induced to abandon her resistance not, like the original Lucretia, by the threat of dishonor, which she then expiates by her death, but in response first to the rationalizations of her husband and above all her confessor and her mother, and then, once she has yielded, in return for the love that Callimaco bears for her and, it is safe to assume from Callimaco's report, the pleasure that she derives from his lovemaking. Machiavelli has thus invoked the model of rigid feminine virtue as the standard against which to measure his own Lucrezia's compliance, and of course to show her as wanting. But the real tension is in her own nature: between her upright principles, which are what make it such a challenge for Callimaco to attain her, and her final surrender.

It has been argued that the truly provocative and offensive aspect of Machiavelli's *The Prince* has been, not the cold pragmatism with which he lays out strategies for achieving and maintaining power in the state, but rather the apparent hypocrisy with which he insists that a prince should make an outward show of respect for virtue and decency while using every means, however unscrupulous, to preserve his rule. It is true that Machiavelli rejected the traditional association between

authority and virtue, and this was inflammatory enough. But as Isaiah Berlin argued almost forty years ago in an influential essay titled "The Question of Machiavelli," it cannot be "only Machiavelli's 'realism' or his advocacy of brutal or unscrupulous or ruthless politics that has so deeply upset so many later thinkers and driven some of them to explain or explain away his advocacy of force and fraud. The fact that the wicked are seen to flourish or that wicked courses appear to pay has never been very remote from the consciousness of mankind."⁷ Berlin acknowledges that Machiavelli rejected Christian ethics as a principle of politics but holds that he substituted for it "a rival (Roman or classical) morality, an alternative realm of ends. In other words, the conflict is between two moralities, Christian and pagan." That pagan world preferred by Machiavelli, however, "is built on recognition of the need for systematic guile and force by rulers." Here is the rub: an ethics that at the same time allows for every sort of deception and compulsion in the service of the society's higher interests.

Some measures may be so cruel that Machiavelli himself affirms that they "should be avoided by everyone. In fact, the life of a private citizen would be preferable to that of a king at the expense of the ruin of so many human beings. Nevertheless, whoever is unwilling to adopt the first and humane course must, if he wishes to maintain his power, follow the latter evil course. But men generally decide upon a middle course which is most hazardous; for they know neither how to be wholly good nor wholly bad, and so lose both worlds."⁸ Berlin concludes that "Machiavelli's cardinal achievement is his uncovering of an insoluble dilemma, the planting of a permanent question mark in the path of posterity. It stems from his *de facto* recognition that ends equally ultimate, equally sacred, may contradict each other, that entire systems of value may come into collision without possibility of rational arbitration, and that not merely in exceptional circumstances . . . but (this was surely new) as part of the normal human situation."

We wish to argue that something like this unresolvable conflict between values systems is at work in Machiavelli's *Mandragola*, and more generally, that it is part and parcel of what we may call the logic of seduction. Seduction depends not on force but on persuasion; it is precisely in this regard that it differs from rape.⁹ But seduction is not reducible to persuasion. Persuasion is a matter of convincing another person to alter an opinion or an attitude: one abandons the old view and adopts the new. One may be persuaded that the earth revolves around the sun, rather than vice versa; no one speaks of being seduced into believing this, if the evidence is presented fairly. Seduction involves a sleight of hand; it suggests tricking the other person into accepting a proposition or a form of behavior to which she or he would not have consented if all the facts and circumstances had been taken into account. A seducer has ulterior motives. But beyond the element of deception,

seduction carries a further charge: one may have given one's full and honest assent to a proposition (note the double sense of that term), taking into account all aspects of the question, and nevertheless retain a sense that it was wrong or inappropriate to do so. This is why seduction is so often associated with regret: one has done what one wished, even upon considered reflection—all the facts were known—and yet in retrospect one does not wholly approve of it.¹⁰ The explanation of this odd state of mind, it seems to us, is precisely that one entertains, perhaps unconsciously, two systems of value that are mutually incompatible. As Berlin (1971) puts it, Machiavelli presented the world, and posterity, with "an insoluble dilemma," which derives from the recognition that "ends equally ultimate, equally sacred, may contradict each other, that entire systems of value may come into collision without possibility of rational arbitration." Lucrezia represents the qualities of a virtuous woman—it is the reason, at least in part, why Callimaco has found her so irresistibly attractive, just as it was for Sextus Tarquinius in the case of the original Lucretia—and yet she surrenders just this dimension of her allure when she cheerfully accepts Callimaco as her lover.¹¹ Though she is not at all conscience-stricken by her decision, so far as one can tell, any more than Machiavelli himself seems to harbor any deep moral qualms about the ruthless counsels he offers to a would-be monarch in *The Prince*, the comedy depends on the recognition that Lucrezia is behaving in some way contrary to her own principles and to the traditional and still dominant ethical values of her society.¹²

The sleaziest character in the *Mandragola* is, without question, Frate Timoteo, Lucrezia's confessor. It is he who does most to convince Lucrezia that sleeping with a stranger in the hopes of providing her husband with a son is morally permissible and in conformity with the teachings of the church. His arguments are a model of casuistry. He is first put to the test by Ligurio, who sounds him out on his willingness to endorse an abortion for a girl—purportedly the daughter of Cammillo Calfucci, Nicia's cousin—who got pregnant while in a convent; he consents to this on the grounds that it will preserve the honor of all parties concerned, and that the three hundred ducats that Nicia will donate to the church will permit him to do a great deal of charity, while all that will be lost is "a piece of unborn flesh." As Ligurio says, "I believe that good is that which does good to the most, and that by which the most are contented" (act 3, scene 4). Softened up by this first approach (Ligurio pretends that the girl miraculously had a miscarriage, so nothing more is required on that score), Timoteo then agrees to the principal scheme of bringing Callimaco to Lucrezia's bed. His reasoning is equally specious; as he says in a soliloquy: "It's true that I've been duped; nevertheless, this trick is to my profit. Messer Nicia and Callimaco are rich, and, in different ways, I'll get a lot from each

of them; it's convenient for the thing to be kept secret, because telling it matters as much to them as to me. Be that as it may, I don't repent of it. It's quite true that there will be difficulty, because Madonna Lucrezia is wise and good; but I'll dupe her by her goodness" (act 3, scene 9). He proceeds to employ the same sophistry with Lucrezia herself, urging her to approve a definite good—that she will become pregnant—over an uncertain evil, that the man who first lies with her will die; and in addition that her proper goal in life is to make her husband happy, and it is this that will earn her a seat in heaven (act 3, scene 11).

There is no equivalent in ancient comedy to this role for a man of the church.¹³ Of course, there are characters who stand up for virtuous behavior: we have already mentioned Alcmena's defense, in Plautus's *Amphitruo*, of her own moral integrity. But there is no figure who represents a divinely sanctioned standard of conduct, the violation of which is regarded as a sin (it is questionable whether the idea of sin, in the Christian sense of the term, existed in classical antiquity). It is impossible not to regard Timoteo as a hypocrite. Anyone, of course, can be a rogue and act contrary to what is right. But Timoteo is bound by his profession to maintain the strictest honesty and moral clarity, and when he exploits utilitarian arguments to twist ecclesiastical doctrine, something more is at stake: Machiavelli is not simply criticizing corruption in the church but rather is offering a defense of pragmatism even as he concedes the church's moral and religious authority in the community. This is just the kind of paradoxical coexistence of contradictory value systems that Berlin saw as the source of that unease that invades readers of *The Prince*.

If hypocrisy is the tribute that vice pays to virtue, as Le Rochefoucauld said ("l'hypocrisie est un hommage que le vice rend à la vertu"), then seduction represents the kind of vice that cannot exist without virtue. It is a form of persuasion that does not assault good faith or conviction directly but rather undermines it, so that it continues to stand, but shakily. Machiavelli is, we believe, the first to have made seduction a theme of comedy in the European tradition.

There was, to be sure, a source, though not a dramatic one, for Machiavelli's inspiration, namely, Boccaccio's story of Catella and Ricciardo, the sixth tale narrated on the third day of the *Decameron*.¹⁴ Ricciardo Minutolo is in love with Catella, the wife of Filippello Fighinolfi. To win her confidence, Ricciardo first gives it to be known that he is courting another woman and so has given up all designs on Catella. Then, conscious of her jealous disposition, Ricciardo tells her that his own wife is having an affair with her husband, and that they have arranged a tryst in a dark corner of the local bath. At Ricciardo's suggestion, Catella herself goes to the bath, with the intention first of giving herself passionately to her wayward spouse, and then reproaching him for his infidelity (since he believes that he

had in fact made love with Ricciardo's wife and not his own). But it is, of course, Ricciardo with whom she has lain. When he reveals himself, Catella is furious at the deception.

But Ricciardo, seeing that she was still much ruffled in spirit, was resolved not to let her go, until he had made his peace with her. So he addressed himself to soothe her; and by dint of most dulcet phrases and entreaties and adjurations he did at last prevail with her to give him her pardon; nay, by joint consent, they tarried there a great while to the exceeding great delight of both. Indeed the lady, finding her lover's kisses smack much better than those of her husband, converted her asperity into sweetness, and from that day forth cherished a most tender love for Ricciardo; whereof, using all circumspection, they many a time had solace.¹⁵

Salvatore Di Maria has remarked on some of the changes that Machiavelli has introduced into the tale related by Boccaccio: "The long and detailed account of Ricciardo's unrelenting courtship underscores the consuming power of love and the irrepressible urge to satisfy one's natural passions. By contrast, Callimaco falls in love with Lucrezia immediately upon hearing about her beauty and manages to bed her within a short time after arriving in town. The sudden infatuation and the quick seduction tend to trivialize the importance that the Boccaccian source places on the power of love."¹⁶ Di Maria also notes the importance of the change in the locale of the seduction: "Adultery, in addition to being a serious breach of the wedding vows taken before God and the community, makes a mockery of marriage when it is perpetrated in one's own home, the very temple of holy matrimony. Nicia's consent to induce his wife to commit adultery in their home and on their own bed defines him as a shallow individual incapable of appreciating the serious implications of his deed."¹⁷ As for Lucrezia, Di Maria invokes a strand of allegorical interpretation, according to which "she is a moral casualty reminiscent of the city of Florence, which . . . was allowed to come under the control of the Francophile Lorenzo de' Medici (Callimaco) while the Florentine Gonfalonier Soderini (Nicia) remained the nominal head of state".¹⁸ We may add that, when Catella surrenders to Ricciardo, she believes him to be her husband and so does not willingly consent to adultery; in this, she resembles Plautus's Alcmena. Lucrezia, on the contrary, agrees, albeit under considerable moral pressure, to sleep with a stranger. But Catella and Lucrezia are alike in their final decision to accept the lover, once their own virtue has been compromised and the lover's identity has been revealed. In both cases, the trick effects an alteration in their moral posture and will.¹⁹

Seduction, in the rich sense of the term suggested above, is relatively rare in any genre of classical antiquity, and the question of its sources and the conditions under which it became a central topic of literature still await analysis. If we were pressed to venture a hypothesis, we might point to Christianity as a factor, with its emphasis on sexual virtue and its anxiety about breaches of faith. But perhaps the theme goes back to the serpent that induced Eve to bite into the apple of carnal knowledge.

In creating a comedy based on seduction, Machiavelli introduced into the genre a new kind of woman: free, independent minded, honest, and upright, a woman who can accept responsibility for her decisions and, when compelled to violate what she understands to be sacred principles, can make the best of it and happily maintain a clandestine affair while professing loyalty to her husband. Though she is humiliatingly manipulated by all the characters in the drama, she emerges as the equal of the lustful and deceitful Callimaco. Where ancient comedy typically ended in the celebration or renewal of a marriage, with the purpose of procreating legitimate children, the finale of the *Mandragola* indeed salvages the relationship between husband and wife but also marks the commencement of a new relationship, that of Lucrezia and Callimaco: both bonds are validated simultaneously. The child that results will, moreover, be illegitimate, in violation of classical New Comedy's obsession with preserving the purity of the citizen stock. Finally, Lucrezia does not merely accept passively what her husband has decided but chooses a new way of life, leaving her husband in ignorance. If Callimaco is a comic version of Machiavelli's prince, he has found in Lucrezia a worthy princess, and for those who would keep women in their place, she is a cause for alarm. For if Livy's heroine slew herself "so that no woman might ever live unchastely because of the example of Lucretia," what is one to think of the future influence of her Renaissance descendant?

NOTES

1. Act 5, scene 4; this and other citations are from Flaumenhaft's 1981 translation.
2. It is possible that Machiavelli knew or had heard of a comedy by Alexis called the "Mandragorizomene" or "Woman Under the Influence of the Mandrake," known from several fragments cited by Athenaeus (145–9 Kassel-Austin = fr. 142–6 K). Both comedies involve a doctor; in the Greek play there is reference to the Doric dialect, while in Machiavelli's Callimaco (pretending to be a medical man) speaks Latin.
3. *Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online*, s.v. "seduce," <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/seduce>; accessed April 4, 2014.

4. Dorota Dutsch points out that Lucrezia's declaration mirrors those of men seduced by courtesans in Roman comedy, for example Pistoclerus in the *Bacchides* (92): "Now, woman, I enslave myself to you: I am yours, I devote myself to you" (*nunc ego, mulier, tibi me emancupo: tuus sum, tibi dedo operam*). Conceivably Machiavelli imagined Lucrezia in the position of men (including the married men in the *Bacchides*) who are led astray by wily courtesans.

5. Cf. the mordant aphorism by the British writer and director Christopher Hampton: "To seduce a woman famous for strict morals, religious fervor and the happiness of her marriage: what could possibly be more prestigious?" (quoted in Robert Andrews 1993, 818).

6. Sasso (1997, 4:299–321) points to Renaissance discussions of Lucretia that might have influenced Machiavelli's choice of the name, in particular Coluccio Salutati, *Declamatio*, and Lorenzo Valla, *De vero falsoque bono*. Sasso (1997, 4:315–16) comments: "Delle due Lucrezie, la prima, quella romana, patì la violenza all'improvviso dall'esterno, senza essere minimamente consapevole di ciò che stava per accadere. . . . La seconda invece la subì dopo che punto per punto era stata istruita dal frate, dal marito e dalla madre. . . . Ma a questo punto le differenze hanno termine; e nell'analisi del Valla prendono rilievo le analogie che, qualora fosse stata certa di potere, non vista e sospettata, consumare il suo tradimento, per certo anche la Lucrezia romana avrebbe rese manifeste nel suo comportamento nei confronti di quello messo in atto dalla donna fiorentina che aveva il suo stesso nome."

7. Berlin 1971.

8. *Discourses* 1.26; trans. by Detmold 1882.

9. Some critics maintain that Callimaco's act is indeed a kind of rape, since Lucrezia is coerced into accepting him in her bed, under false pretenses; cf. Sasso (1987–88, 3:78): "Il mondo dell'intelligenza, della critica, della spregiudicata iniziativa intellettuale non è il suo mondo [i.e., that of Lucrezia]. La donna che, enfaticamente, viene definita degna di 'governare un regno,' è, invece, l'oggetto di ogni autorità che a lei si presenti nel segno e nel sigillo della forza"; see also Sasso 1987–88, 3:121, 150. Richard Andrews (1993, 53) observes: "The only thing that we are sure of is that [Lucrezia] started by wanting to be chaste, and in no way colluded with Callimaco, and so what has been practised on her is effectively rape," and he suggests that "all we can say is that if we are expected to rejoice with her [i.e., Lucrezia], Machiavelli has been inefficient about making the fact clear on paper" (54). The case, however, is quite different from Jupiter's assault on Alcmena, who consents because she believes that the god is in fact her husband—a situation that bears a closer resemblance to Boccaccio's account of Catella and Ricciardo, for which see discussion later in the chapter. By way of contrast, Ferroni sees Lucrezia as the model of a clever woman (*savvia*), who knows how to take advantage of the situation in which she finds herself: "L'accettazione della fortuna è completamente cosciente, vale come una assunzione di responsabilità, come una presa di possesso delle circostanze, per cui è Lucrezia stessa ad impartire ordini a Callimaco e a formulare precisi programmi per il futuro" (1972, 98). Alonge affirms: "Il peso della tradizione plautino-terenziana è minimo, e maggiore è semmai l'innesto boccacciano (l'innamoramento per fama, e proprio a Parigi; i maneggi dell'innamorato per strappare la propria dama al marito; il colloquio degli amanti una volta svelato l'inganno etc.) che si salda ovviamente al gusto tutto toscano della beffa" (2001, 241); but to Lucrezia, Alonge

(253) ascribes “una percezione nitida del vizio, del male antagonista del bene, e c'è il coraggio eroico di contrapporsi al mondo, di far valere il diritto della propria coscienza in sfida all'interesse anche dell'intero universo”; in the end, Lucrezia accepts Callimaco on the basis of a rational calculus: she now has someone who can give her children, but she is not seduced by the night spent with him: “Lucrezia beffata beffa a sua volta: ma beffa non solo il marito bensì anche l'amante occasionale. . . . Lucrezia potrà contare d'ora in avanti su due mariti: ma non per avere più godimenti sessuali . . . bensì per avere la certezza di poter figliare abbondantemente grazie al più giovane e fecondo donatore di seme che è naturalmente Callimaco” (257).

10. Cf. Sowa (1984, 67): “In the theme of Seduction, one person persuades another to have sex with him or her, usually against the better judgment of the person being seduced. Because seduction usually involves some kind of beguilement or deceit, it tended to be associated with characters that had developed as wily or jealous, like Hera, Odysseus, Penelope, and Aphrodite” (e.g., Hes. *Theog.* 205; *Il.* 14.217; *Il.* 3.339; *Od.* 4.261–62; *H. Aphr.* 7 and 33, 36–38). Sowa states: “The elements of the Seduction theme are as follows: First comes the motivation felt by the seducer, causing him or her to undertake the seduction. Second is the preparation for the seduction, usually including a Bath and Dressing scene. Next, the seducer goes to the object of his desire; we see the reaction of the person being seduced. The seducer argues against various objections that the desired person raises or might raise. This stage may or may not involve the telling of a lie by the seducer; the element of deceit, however, seems necessary in any case, even if the deceit is not carried out by the seducer. Finally, there is the actual intercourse scene, after which the lovers sleep, reawaken, and get dressed” (68–70).

11. Bonino remarks: “La novità più cospicua [in the representation of love in the play] consiste nel fatto che, a questo eros nobile espresso da Callimaco in termini lirici ed altamente intonati, si mescola costantemente una trama compatta di immagini, similitudini, metafore, punteggiate dai discorsi di tutti i personaggi, che alludono invece ad un eros basso, carnale e volgare. . . . In questo Machiavelli rivela le sue strette affinità con tutta una tradizione comica e burlesca tipicamente fiorentina, compiaciuta di tematiche salaci, contemplata con umore beffardo e irriverente” (1980, 306). For the ideal of courtly love in Boccaccio's *Decameron*, see Stewart (1986, 62–70). Of the *Mandragola* Stewart remarks: “In questa commedia fatta di parole che fanno ridere e di parole che fanno pensare, la grottesca avventura notturna è un episodio di grande movimento scenico. Il travestimento collettivo dà evidenza visiva alla grande idea, in cui . . . sta il significato più profondo della commedia: la complicità collettiva, la responsabilità di tutti, compresa la vittima nell'inganno e nel male ‘noi abbiamo tutti a travestirci’ ciascuno per una sua particolare predisposizione—per calcolo, per malizia, per cinismo, per passione per sciocchezza” (1986, 237).

12. For a more moralizing interpretation, see Blasucci, who says of Lucrezia's final response to Callimaco: “Non siamo propriamente davanti ad una festosa celebrazione dell'*omnia vincit amor*, ma al risentimento di una coscienza delusa e contrariata che da quella delusione ha tratto argomento per una nuova e più spregiudicata norma di azione” (1964, xviii–xix); cf. Ferroni 1972.

13. Raimondi (1972, 243) argues that Machiavelli's play is closer in spirit to Aristophanic comedy than to New Comedy, inasmuch as it offers via laughter a critical perspective on contemporary society. Raimondi notes that Italian Renaissance comedy tended rather to prefer Terence's plots to Aristophanic satire, as endorsed by Vittore Fausto in his book, *De Comoedia* (published in 1511: it is a kind of encyclopedic summary of what had been written on comedy until then). It is in this spirit, it would seem, that Raimondi identifies Timoteo as the key character in the *Mandragola*: "Fra tutti i personaggi della *Mandragola* quello del frate presenta i caratteri più tipici, come dichiarano i suoi stessi compagni di scena anticipando o . . . avvalorando il giudizio di un pubblico che la commedia presuppone essenzialmente fiorentino. . . . Il ruolo di cui viene investito Timoteo nell'intrigo ai danni di Nicia coinvolge a poco a poco un ordine di valori, un sistema di gerarchie, sullo sfondo di un contesto storico in cui entra per forza con i suoi fantasmi e le sue incomprensioni drammatiche la vita religiosa di Firenze, ma ripresa di sbieco, alla periferia del privato che non ha storia. E forse consiste in questo il comico della *Mandragola*, di acento più aspro ed ambiguo, da polemica libertina contro il mondo attuale dei piagnoni e i falsi devoti" (205). For all the satirical bite, however, Timoteo is hardly an Aristophanic comic hero; he is himself the victim of the ruses of Ligurio, after all.

14. Cf. Di Maria: "Machiavelli's *Mandragola* is commonly considered one of the best comedies of the Italian Renaissance. Students of literature, political sciences, and theater have long appreciated the play's artistic and ideological qualities, including its originality. But the pièce is not altogether original to the extent that Machiavelli borrowed the storyline from Boccaccio's *Decameron*. This practice of utilizing so effectively existing material validates the notion that originality is not limited to pure invention or creation out of nothing. Novelty often lies in the way old stories are re-told or re-presented and in the new view of the world they articulate" (2006, 130).

15. Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, trans. J. M. Rigg (1903, 216).

16. Di Maria 2006, 137.

17. Di Maria 2006, 138.

18. Di Maria 2006, 140. He here refers to the interpretation developed by Parronchi 1962, 37–86.

19. Bardin notes that, in addition to the *Decameron*, one must take account of Boccaccio's operetta *Corbaccio* in order fully to understand "the fundamental and disturbing uneasiness floating under the sunny surface of Machiavelli's comedy" (2001, 5). A large portion of the *Corbaccio* consists in admonishing against the perils of love and, in Bardin's view, provides "a destructive model which Machiavelli deploys against the productive logic of his political writings. In the *Corbaccio* the spirit describes an alternative logic—new and exclusively feminine—that governs the inverted scheme"; this philosophy, known as "*la cianghellina*" (*Cianghella* is an example of feminine depravity in Dante's *Commedia*), "rejects chastity and fidelity, and values instead their opposites, lasciviousness and promiscuity" (15). Sostrata, Bardin argues, is the living example of the "*cianghellina*," and we see the effects of her activity on Lucrezia: "Though at the opening of the play she seems a

fortress of incorruptible virtue, impervious to any insinuation and treachery, by the end of the play she has become perfectly corrupted, having made a new logic of her own. . . . Lucrezia is the only character in the play who changes, and not for the better. She is commonly thought the innocent victim, taken advantage of by all, but in the end, it is she who has complete control over the others. It is not Callimaco's arguments to persuade her to accept him as a lover, nor his amorous skill, but rather her discovery of the working of the world, an awakening into the sphere of treachery where Ligurio is a master and which Callimaco only believes himself part" (16).

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Shakespeare and the Roman Comic *Meretrix*

ARIANA TRAILL

The women of Roman comedy have had a vibrant afterlife; they have reappeared in various guises in Roman satire and elegy, moralizing “Christian Terence” plays, and later dramatic traditions from *commedia erudita* down to the modern situation comedy.¹ Their reception by Shakespeare is only one stage in a long continuum, but an important one in terms of literary and theatrical impact. This chapter focuses on a subgroup of Roman comic women, the *meretrices*. Their Shakespearean descendants have such radically different social positions and mores that their classical elements have not often been recognized.

Few now doubt that Shakespeare had direct knowledge of Plautus and Terence. Like nearly all aspects of the playwright’s biography, his knowledge of Latin remains subject to debate, but most scholars recognize, in the wake of T. W. Baldwin’s landmark studies, that Shakespeare had a grammar school education and could read the major grammar school authors in the original Latin—with, perhaps, occasional recourse to Cooper’s *Thesaurus Linguae Romanae et Britannicae*.² Terence was a central author in typical curricula during the years when Shakespeare would have attended grammar school. Students learning Latin grammar studied examples from Terence; they read excerpts in Udall’s *Flowers for Latin Speaking, Selected and Gathered out of Terence and the same translated into English*; and they soon came to speeches, scenes, and eventually entire plays. “The typical schoolboy at the age of nine would begin to memorize a great part, if not all, of Terence,” notes Baldwin. “[Terence] was in the very air and in consequence likely to be partially absorbed by all who had the slightest contact with learning.”³ Study could involve performance, and it certainly included “double translation” (translating the Latin to English, and then attempting to turn the English back into the original Latin),

as well as imitative composition exercises.⁴ Plautus, although not in the “orthodox mainstream” of early education, regularly appeared in the advanced curriculum.⁵ Some asymmetries in Shakespeare’s use of Plautus and Terence probably reflect school canons: the three plays excerpted by Udall, *Andria*, *Eunuchus*, and *Heauton*, are more prominent than the others; likewise, *Amphitruo*, *Captivi*, *Casina*, *Menaechmi*, *Mostellaria*, *Miles*, and *Rudens* constitute the core of Shakespeare’s Plautus.⁶ Distinctive elements in these plays leave a heavy stamp: Pyrgopolynices’s atypical delusion of being attractive to women, for example, recurs in Falstaff and Malvolio. The second duping scheme in *Miles* appears in three different plays, discussed below, as does the disguise plot from *Eunuchus*. Perhaps most pertinent here, Terentian humanism is the norm for Roman comic female types: “unjustly suspected women” (*mulieres suspectas . . . falso, Hec. 777*) are frequent, as are women who play against negative stereotypes. There are no grasping Phronesiums and Bacchides, only generous—and chaste—*meretrices*.

Efforts to understand Shakespeare’s relationship to his classical models have traditionally focused on identifying direct borrowings and have privileged explicit textual allusions: verbal parallels and the occasional direct quotation. The very pervasiveness of the tradition, however, complicates the identification of classically derived elements, particularly elements that draw on multiple traditions or have been mediated by other vernacular adaptations, or that do not correspond to any specific Latin text. Some scholars have consequently adopted more expansive notions of influence, recognizing that “ancient authors lived on in dramatic conventions, in stock characters . . . situations . . . or rhetorical forms,” that Roman texts can function as deep sources (being “ubiquitously present in various forms, self-consciously adapted or fully naturalized”), and they can be misremembered or even fabricated.⁷

Particularly useful here is L. G. Clubb’s concept of the theatergram.⁸ A theatergram is a dramaturgic element that exists within a common repertoire and is subject to permutation, combination, and gradual evolution. Clubb developed the concept to describe the common repertoire of “units, figures, relationships, actions, *topoi*, and framing patterns” in Italian Cinquecento theater, particularly *commedia dell’arte*, but it is broad enough to encompass classical pre-texts (indeed, Clubb recognizes theatergrams whose histories begin with Roman comedy).⁹ It is also well suited to a dramatist like Shakespeare, who drew eclectically on Roman, Italian, and other traditions. As she notes, contamination of genres was a natural development of the combinatory process inherent in theatergrams. Genre mixing was already recognized in antiquity, for example, in Satyrus’s claim that Euripides invented the elements of New Comedy or Plautus’s coinage *tragicomoedia* to describe *Amphitruo*.¹⁰ Clubb identifies theatergrams of person, association, design,

action, and motion. This is a useful way of conceptualizing a borrowed element, both more specific and more flexible than a stock type, plot, or situation, yet easily recognizable by playwright and audience alike, and capacious enough to cover specific relationships as well as more general ones, and performance traditions as well as textual sources. The theatergram offers a dynamic notion of dramatic convention that recognizes constant evolution as normative. It does not relegate the ancient texts, for example, to the role of static exemplars but recognizes that characters are already “playing against type,” combining traits, or appropriating other roles from the beginning of the tradition.

This chapter focuses on Roman comedy-derived theatergrams relating to the *meretrix mala* and associated types (*ancilla*, *lena*).¹¹ As a theatergram of person, the *meretrix* is rare in English Renaissance drama; public moral standards sharply limited the appearance of prostitutes.¹² Theatergrams of action, association, and design, however, that center on a *meretrix* in Plautus or Terence transfer with surprising ease to Shakespearian figures whose signal virtue is chastity. The latter come from the marriageable classes but exhibit qualities of ingenuity, performance skill, and verbal facility in Roman-derived contexts, sometimes in contradiction to more conservative feminine virtues that they show elsewhere. These subtle tensions, illustrating the quasi paradox that “wives may be merry, and yet honest too” (*MW* 4.2.97), reveal vestiges of a different cultural narrative embedded in the Roman tradition on which Shakespeare drew—consciously or unconsciously. The examples discussed below reflect different modes of engagement. The first group derives ultimately from a specific pre-text, the *Miles Gloriosus*, a play Shakespeare clearly knew. This group consists of variations on a theatergram of motion originally performed by the *meretrix* Acroteleutium and her *ancilla* Milphidippa but now played by women of virtue, with awkward elements of the Roman *meretrix* that need to be explained, excused, or delegated. The second group of examples illustrates a less direct connection to Plautus and Terence. These are *meretrix*-related theatergrams played out around a kind of accidental *meretrix*, a chaste figure who enables the performance of the Roman material without accepting the role.

In *Miles*, a wealthy bachelor, a young lover, and a clever slave join forces to convince the braggart soldier Pyrgopolynices that a fictitious married woman loves him desperately. They hire Acroteleutium to play the part and Milphidippa to prepare the soldier for, and to assist in, a duping scene in which the “wife” pretends to be infatuated to the point of physical illness, collapsing at his approach (1216–83).¹³ As is typical of Plautine dramaturgy, this is largely an eavesdropping scene in which the soldier overhears the women’s staged conversation.¹⁴ Typical as well are the elaborate metatheatrical preparations that precede it. Acroteleutium is “costumed . . . like a married woman” (*ornatam . . . ex matronarum modo*, 791),

“rehearsed” (*meditatam*, 903), and re-rehearsed (after reviewing her part, the slave Palaestrio gives her specific lines to use, 1165–73). At the start of the scene, she and Milphidippa trade asides about blocking (“Where is he? On the left.” *ubi est? ad laeuam*, 1216) and delivery (“don’t spare your voice, so he hears,” *ne parce uocem, ut audiat*, 1220). In the actual duping, she emphasizes the soldier’s alleged fastidiousness, which is belied by his responses (Palaestrio has to prevent him from falling at her feet), and the extreme and desperate nature of her passion. She draws inspiration from the poet Sappho, who died, according to legend, of unrequited love, and who was a frequent figure in later Greek comedy. Acroteleutium’s symptoms suspiciously resemble those described in fr. 31 Voigt.¹⁵

Versions of this theatergram appear in *Much Ado about Nothing*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *Twelfth Night*. In the first, the old father Don Pedro conspires with his daughter’s fiancé, Claudio, and his friend Leonato to convince the eavesdropping soldier Benedick that Don Pedro’s niece, Beatrice, is in love with him (2.3); the trick is repeated by his daughter Hero and her maid, Ursula, who persuade an eavesdropping Beatrice that Benedick loves her, with much reproof of her well-known “disdain” for him (3.1). The basic configuration of the trick is the same—the eavesdropping victim, fabricated passion, purported fear of rejection—and the participants exhibit a very Plautine self-consciousness of the scheme as a theatrical performance. Robert Miola was the first to identify a connection between the *Miles* adultery scheme and two parallel duping scenes in *Ado*.¹⁶ Miola notes asides similar to *Mil.* 1216 (“See you where Benedick hath hid himself? / Oh, very well, my lord,” 2.3.39–40; “For look where Beatrice, like a lapwing, runs / . . . to hear our conference,” 3.1.24–5).¹⁷ Indeed, most of Hero’s opening speech is devoted to specifying roles, script, and blocking (e.g., “Our talk must only be of Benedick. / When I do name him, let it be thy part / To praise him more than ever man did merit,” 3.1.17–19), even though (as in Plautus) her cast needs no tutoring and she herself departs from her script.¹⁸ The exuberant pleasure in deception, the teasers to build up anticipation, and the thick layer of dramatic irony in this scene are typical of Plautus, while the self-conscious role-playing seems a distinctive echo of *Miles*, which features atypically lengthy, repetitive training for the adultery scheme and extensive preparatory discussion among the participants.

There are minor contradictions that hint at the conflation of genre and sources in *Ado*. Hero’s participation in the duping scheme, though voluntary, is strikingly out of character. Her hallmark qualities throughout the rest of the play are innocence, trust, sincerity, and chastity. She is the passive victim of a malicious scheme, too modest to tolerate Margaret’s bawdy joking before the marriage (3.4), and yet here, when Ursula talks about Benedick sharing Beatrice’s bed, she invokes Cupid in ready agreement (“O god of love! I know he doth deserve / As much as may be

yielded to a man,” 3.1.47–48). She is suddenly outspoken (roughly 60 percent of her total lines, and all of her longest speeches, appear in this scene), self-confident, deceptive, and something of a *praeceptor amoris*. Miola notes, for example, her *subdola perfidia* and “capacity for improvisation and mimicry” here.¹⁹ She compares herself to a hunter, ready to make “little Cupid’s crafty arrow” (3.1.22) and lay “false sweet bait” (3.1.33), and she echoes Ursula’s bird-catching metaphor (“She’s limed, I warrant you . . . / If it prove so, then loving goes by haps; / Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps,” 3.1.104–6). Bird-catching metaphors are not infrequent in Plautus—or Shakespeare—but it is worth noting that three appear near the beginning of the adultery scheme in *Miles*, the last spoken by Milphidippa.²⁰ Act 3, scene 1 in *Much Ado* marks a shift in genre whereby Hero steps out of the role of romance heroine and into a comic part with more than a passing resemblance to Acroteleutium’s maid, Milphidippa.²¹ Hero takes on the qualities essential to the Plautine scheme for its short duration, and these happen to be the qualities of a Plautine junior prostitute.

The feelings and behaviors that Don Pedro and company attribute to Beatrice in order to dupe Benedick represent no less of a genre shift, though it is from comedy to tragic romance (Acroteleutium, as noted above, similarly switched to a lyric vein). There is a similar dramaturgy here: Acroteleutium’s passion, like “Beatrice’s,” is described to the soldier in a preliminary scene that establishes the delusory nature of his beliefs, builds anticipation for her tour-de-force performance, and creates suspense about how and when the truth will emerge (both plays save this for the very end). Acroteleutium’s fictitious passion was also extreme, and one aspect of “Beatrice’s” may be specific to *Miles*. Don Pedro and company describe her passion as overwhelming, transformative, and violent—“ecstasy,” in the original sense of “being ‘beside oneself,’ thrown into a frenzy or a stupor, with anxiety, astonishment, fear, or passion” (*OED* s.v. 1); it is much closer to Acroteleutium’s *eros* than to the decorous and self-controlled emotions of Shakespeare’s other lovelorn women, including Beatrice herself (“I was about to protest I loved you” [4.1.282–3] is how she eventually describes her feelings to Benedick). Yet the fictitious Beatrice engages in classical gestures of grief, including beating the breast and tearing the hair (“weeps, sobs, beats her heart, tears her hair, prays, curses,” 2.3.150–51, “the poor woman is tormented and beats herself, weeping, because she needs you”).²² She even threatens suicide: “The ecstasy hath so much overborne her that my daughter is sometime afraid she will do a desperate outrage to herself” (154–56). Shakespeare’s women typically love with patience, dedication, and suffering. The few suicides for love are largely classical—Cleopatra, Lavinia, Portia, “Thisbe” (the model for Juliet’s death by sword)—and respond to actual losses.²³ What is imagined for Beatrice is not, however, rationally motivated; it would be

the outcome of an undisclosed love, like that of Viola's imaginary sister in *Twelfth Night* ("she sat like Patience on a monument," 2.4.114), but with unparalleled violence and intentionality. What it most resembles is Acroteleutium's suicide threat: "I am resolved to die; I know that I cannot live without him" (1241: *consciscam letum: uiuere sine illo scio me non posse*).²⁴ In *Miles*, however, this line was a joke. After pillaging Sappho's poetry for symptoms of passion, Acroteleutium stole her legendary suicide, without troubling to wait for the soldier's rejection (he is compared to Phaon at 1247, to ensure no one misses the point). Since Plautine women make few groundless threats of violent suicide, this detail suggests a specific link between the two texts.²⁵

What follows is more Ovidian than Plautine: Beatrice's fictitious love turns real, and there is nothing of the Plautine *meretrix* in this; Hero returns to the romance tradition, disappearing into a pretended death until the end of the play; and Benedick sheds the last traces of the *miles gloriosus* when Beatrice famously enlists him to "Kill Claudio!" (4.1.288).²⁶ The Plautine material is specific to the two duping scenes and puts in relief the irregular and temporary nature of the roles that the women are playing. Something similar happens in *Merry Wives*, where the same theatergram is performed by Mrs. Ford, Mrs. Page, and Mrs. Quickly against Sir John Falstaff. "Let's appoint him a meeting," explains Mrs. Page, "give him a show of comfort in his suit, and lead him on with a fine-baited delay till he hath pawned his horses to mine Host of the Garter" (2.1.89–92). The trick follows the Plautine template: the lure of an adulterous affair leads Falstaff to humiliation, exposure, and punishment—including the loss of the horses, which are seized until he repays money received under false pretenses. As often in Shakespeare, the scheme is multiplied and multisourced: there are two infatuated wives and three failed trysts with the soldier.²⁷ Several Italian *novelle* furnish the primary sources for the play, although the basic configuration, "a young woman is married to an old man" (*adulescens nuptast cum sene*, 966), is already Plautine and the adulteries in the Italian sources are real, not pretense.²⁸

Like Hero, Mrs. Ford temporarily takes on elements of a Plautine prostitute in order to punish a braggart soldier. Her performance is also highly self-conscious. She trains the servants in their roles (3.3.7–13) and uses overtly theatrical language ("Mistress Page, remember you your cue," 3.3.32, cf. Milphidippa's warning to Acroteleutium at *Mil.* 1219: *tuomst principium*). The careful preparations and staginess are by no means unique to *Merry Wives*, but their prominence here underscores the reshaping of the Italian sources via Plautus. A disjunction between the role and the performer is emphasized, in order to ensure that the audience recognizes the wife's "infatuation" as an imposture: the Plautine theatergram is embedded within narratives of adultery punished, not condoned (as it is in the Italian sources).

Mrs. Ford thus plays her role equivocally, deprecating the idea of marriage to Falstaff in ambiguous terms (“I your lady, Sir John? Alas, I should be a pitiful lady,” 3.3.45–46) and reminding the audience of the trick while fostering the soldier’s hopes (“Well, heaven knows how I love you, and you shall one day find it,” 3.3.73–74).²⁹ As with other female figures in *meretrix* roles, Shakespeare pointedly emphasizes Mrs. Ford’s chastity (“I will consent to act any villainy against him that may not sully the chariness of our honesty,” 2.1.93–5) and delegates the most compromising behaviors required for the scheme to Mrs. Quickly, an erstwhile bawd (her role in the *Henriad*), who provides the effusive flattery and exaggerated claims of infatuation needed to convince the soldier (“you have brought her into such a canaries,” 2.2.57–58; cf. 97–98).³⁰ Mrs. Quickly implicitly classes Mrs. Ford as the exclusive, sought-after courtesan she would have been in Plautus (“coach after coach, letter after letter, gift after gift. . . and, I warrant you, they could never get an eye-wink of her,” 2.2.62–68), yet there is a heavy—and exculpating—emphasis on the moral purpose of this scheme to “teach him [sc. Falstaff] to know turtles from jays” (3.3.35–36).

A final example of the *Miles* adultery theatergram may serve to introduce a group of Shakespearean women who are circumstanced for the role of *meretrix mala* but not given the temperament.³¹ In *Twelfth Night*, the maid Maria effectively impersonates her mistress, Olivia, in a scheme to dupe Malvolio, a braggart who shares Pyrgopolynices’s vulnerability to flattery (“so crammed, as he thinks, with excellencies, that it is his grounds of faith that all that look on him love him,” 2.3.149–51; cf. “he claims that all the women in Ephesus run after him”).³² The scheme hinges on an unsigned letter professing “Olivia’s” infatuation with a steward, that is, Malvolio, who finds the letter and reads it aloud. Maria knows how to mimic her mistress’s handwriting (2.3.158–59) and voice (“Her very phrases!” 2.5.90), and the trick deceives him, leading to a series of embarrassing gaffes that the perpetrators regard, in good Plautine form, as fair punishment for his attempts to spoil their pleasures. As in the first duping scene in *Much Ado*, the “Acroteleutium” role is at odds with the character’s public persona (specifically, Olivia’s preoccupation with mourning her brother) and foisted on her *in absentia*: the feigned symptoms of intense passion appear only in the letter (“To the unknown beloved . . . Jove knows I love . . . She thus advises thee that sighs for thee,” 2.5.89, 95, 149).

What is different here from the other two instances of this theatergram discussed above is the broader generic context in which Olivia is situated. Her house provides a setting for romantic encounters—her own pursuit of Viola and subsequent marriage to Sebastian, Maria and Sir Toby’s subtle courtship, Sir Andrew’s ineffectual suit, and of course Malvolio’s futile hopes. It is not difficult to recognize

the traces of a *domus meretricia*, a female establishment led by a woman who is alluring but difficult to approach, where food, entertainment, and (eventually, after marriage) sex are available to a chosen few, and from which unwanted lovers are brusquely excluded.³³ Sir Toby establishes the comic character of the house, with his “quaffing and drinking” (1.3.14), “ill hours” (1.3.6), and pandering (“a foolish knight that you brought in one night here to be her [sc. Olivia’s] wooer,” 1.3.15–17). Malvolio complains outright, “Do ye make an alehouse of my lady’s house” (2.3.88–89), and though Olivia nominally “takes great exceptions” to it all (1.3.5), she does not stop the cakes and ale. Her house is populated by associates of the Roman comic *meretrix*: Sir Andrew, a *miles gloriosus*; Sir Toby, a well-ensconced *parasitus*; and Maria, the pert *ancilla* who exchanges sexual banter with the soldier.³⁴ There is also the *amator exclusus*, Orsino, who sends an emissary, accompanied by “some four or five” attendants (1.4.36, i.e., like Thraso, in *Eunuchus*), to force entrance to the house (“stand at her doors, / And tell them, there thy fixed foot shall grow / Till thou have audience. . . . Be clamorous and leap all civil bounds,” 1.4.16–18, 21).

There is, accordingly, a kind of capitulation to deep source conventions in Olivia’s pursuit of the *adulescens* “Cesario” with “shameful cunning” (3.1.116) and other tactics of the *meretrix*, including an erotically charged meal (“How shall I feast him?” 3.4.2), the gift of a ring (perhaps a distant echo of *Miles* 957–60, where it is part of the duping scheme), and the warm welcome (including marriage) she extends to the visiting twin. More subtly, Olivia’s Lucretia seal (2.5.91–92) reveals the futility of professing chastity within a plot line that inevitably brings sexual experience.

Olivia is cast involuntarily as Malvolio’s Acroteleutium, but she performs other tropes of the *meretrix* with greater complicity and is exonerated, at least technically, by final arrangements that send her *exclusus amator*, *adulescens amans*, *parasitus*, *ancilla*, and herself off into respectable matrimony. Shakespeare uses figures like Olivia to enact prostitute-centered theatergrams derived from Roman comedy without condoning Roman comic ethics surrounding prostitution. In several instances, these women are literally replaced by others more willing to play the role. Maria writes Olivia’s letter, Mrs. Quickly butters up Falstaff, and Margaret impersonates Hero in a scheme to convince Claudio that she has betrayed him. Margaret dresses in Hero’s clothing and appears at her window (a conventional, if postclassical, sign of infidelity, “there shall appear such seeming truth of Hero’s disloyalty,” 2.2.46–47) for an *amator exclusus* scene, bantering with one lover (Borachio) while another (Claudio) overhears.³⁵ Claudio is meant to infer gross promiscuity (Don Pedro leads him along, calling her “Leonato’s Hero, your Hero, every man’s Hero,” 3.2. 100–101), and he falls for the scheme, eventually declaring

her “an approved wanton” (4.1.43). The apparatus of the *meretrix* here—the maid’s *blanditia*, the insinuations of promiscuity, and (one might add) the absence of any real violence—goes beyond the Italian sources for the play. Moreover, Beatrice’s reaction may be read in Terentian terms. She defends Hero (“She is wronged, she is slandered,” 4.1.311) and abuses Claudio in harsh terms (“I would eat his heart in the marketplace,” 4.1.305–6). The dynamics of her exchange with him at 4.1 are closer to comedy than Shakespeare’s other treatments of the same situation (*A Winter’s Tale* 3.2, *Othello*, 5.2). Terence’s Pythias denounced Phaedria for a rape committed by the “eunuch” he gave Thais in equally violent terms (*Eun.* 648: How easily could I go after his eyes with my nails!).³⁶ Her threats are unusually intemperate, though female characters in Terence are regularly validated in their resentment of male misconduct, and this tradition may well color Beatrice’s reaction here. It is hard not to hear an echo of Nausistrata’s “I wish I had been born a man” in her—thrice repeated—“Oh, that I were a man!” (4.1.302, 304–5, 316).³⁷

For Shakespeare, the actions and associations of the Roman comic *meretrix* had to be performed in ways that dissociated them from actual prostitution. These are regularly embedded in errors plots, such as the misrepresentations of Hero, Olivia, and Beatrice discussed above. In several plays, misleading appearances are contrived by larger designs of the plot rather than deliberate schemes by any of the characters, and *The Comedy of Errors* offers an example of this in the figure of Adriana. What is perhaps unusual about Adriana is that the *meretrix* theatergrams she performs are also sourced in the major Plautine models for this play, *Amphitruo* and *Menaechmi*.

Alcumena is the primary model for Adriana’s emotional disposition: her speeches consistently express love for her husband and devotion to marriage and chastity.³⁸ Shrewish elements, it has been noted, are muted, especially compared to her other model, the *Menaechmi* Wife.³⁹ *Amphitruo* provides the template for Adriana’s basic plotline of innocent error, false accusation, and eventual vindication; it also hints at elements of the *meretrix* in Alcumena and subtly compares the returning hero, Amphitryon, to a *miles gloriosus*.⁴⁰ These hints are developed in the lockout scene in *Errors*, a version of a familiar Roman comic theatergram of action, the attack on the prostitute’s house by an angry soldier with a group of hangers-on. Antipholus of Ephesus, Adriana’s husband, brings a couple of associates to his house for dinner and is successively denied entrance by his servant Dromio, a kitchen maid, and Adriana herself on the grounds that “he” (that is, Antipholus of Syracuse) is already there. Like Amphitryon, he turns to violence: “Well, I’ll break in. Go borrow me a crow [sc. crowbar].”⁴¹ Unlike Amphitryon, he is deterred by a companion (Jupiter himself forces Amphitryon to retreat), who points out that forcing entry would be tantamount to publicly accusing Adriana of adultery

("Herein you . . . / . . . draw within the compass of suspect / Th' unviolated honor of your wife," 3.1.86–88). In theatrical terms, the attack would recast Adriana as a *meretrix*, which of course is what Antipholus eventually does when he denounces her as a "dissembling harlot."⁴² There is almost certainly a conflation of sources here: only fragments of the lockout scene in *Amphitruo* survive (and they are not in Lambinus's edition, which Shakespeare may have used), whereas *Eunuchus* offered the preeminent Roman example of this theatergram, including the detail of the parasite convincing the soldier to withdraw (*Eun.* 811–12).⁴³

Less obvious are elements of the *meretrix* Erotium from *Menaechmi* that surprisingly appear in Adriana's part, rather than the Courtesan's.⁴⁴ It was Erotium who met the visiting twin in the street and summoned him to a private dinner. This scene, *Men.* 351–445, provides the framework for *Errors* 2.2.109–218. Erotium sings a *canticum* luring Menaechmus of Syracuse (the wrong twin) into her house; Adriana delivers a lengthy plea for fidelity to Antipholus of Syracuse (2.2.109–45). The latter protests his ignorance: "Plead you to me, fair dame? I know you not / In Ephesus I am but two hours old," 2.2.146–47 (cf. *Men.* 380–1, "he has never set foot in this city before today").⁴⁵ Erotium, like Adriana, is at first dismissive and then indignant.⁴⁶ When Menaechmus finally accepts the invitation, a plan is made to exclude his parasite (423–44); Adriana unwittingly orders her husband locked out ("Sirrah, if any ask you for your master, / Say he dines forth, and let no creature enter," 2.2.208–9), commissioning Dromio to act in the traditional comic role of doorkeeper ("Dromio, keep the gate," 2.2.205; "play the porter well," 2.2.210).

In both cases, the dinner is more than just a dinner, and there are hints in *Errors* of both the Plautine erotic encounter and the financial transaction. Adriana wants the meal to reestablish intimacy with her husband and reinforce the marital bond ("Husband, I'll dine above with you today / And shrive you of a thousand idle pranks," 2.2.206–7; "Come, I will fasten on this sleeve of thine. Thou art an elm, my husband, I a vine," 2.2.172–73). Its purpose is to lure Antipholus away from "the crime of lust" (2.2.140) with the attractions of marriage; it must accordingly be private but can admit a chaperone (Luciana) to guarantee its innocence. There is also a counterpart to the *palla* that Erotium receives as payment, a gold chain that Antipholus of Ephesus hopes will placate Adriana, which is discussed below.⁴⁷

Adriana performs the visible actions of a *meretrix* within an errors plot but does not—we are assured—share Erotium's values, motives, or temperament. This is a consistent element in Shakespeare's use of *meretrix*-related theatergrams, also evident in *All's Well That Ends Well*. Here the young, unmarried Diana pretends to be a prostitute in order to trick Bertram into fulfilling conditions he

stipulated in order to acknowledge Helena, whom he married under duress, as his wife: Helena must be pregnant and in possession of an ancestral ring he never intends to relinquish. Diana fulfills both conditions by agreeing to an assignation at which Helena secretly takes her part and by exacting the ring in advance from Bertram. The scheme is explicitly about sex ("When you have conquered my yet maiden bed," 4.2.57); that it is purchased is only slightly less explicit. Diana talks of honor ("Mine honor's such a ring," 4.2.45), but Bertram later refers to the ring as "her rate" (5.3.218) when he accuses her of prostitution; her rather unconvincing objection ("If I were so, / He might have bought me at a common price," 5.3.190–91) already concedes a financial arrangement. Helena, who initially proposed the bed trick scheme, acknowledges its moral ambiguity ("wicked meaning in a lawful deed, / And lawful meaning in a wicked act," 3.7.45–46). Diana will be "most chastely absent" (3.7.34) and yet paid three thousand crowns. She will earn her dowry by exploiting Bertram's belief that she is a prostitute.

Diana is positioned within a New Comic template. She is the adolescent daughter of an old woman, once respectable but now impoverished ("Though my estate be fall'n, I was well born, / Nothing acquainted with these businesses," 3.7.4–5), who plays something of the *lena* in dispensing cynical advice ("My mother told me just how he would woo, / . . . She says all men / Have the like oaths," 4.2.69–71) and accepting a purse of gold as adequate proof of Helena's story (3.7.11–14). Diana herself attracts the unwanted attentions of a braggart soldier, Parolles, and an unhappily married *adulescens*, Bertram, who have both been "soliciting" her (3.5.15, 69), offering a Terentian choice between poverty and prostitution. For Diana, much more overtly than for Hero, Mrs. Ford, or Olivia, prostitution is a subsidiary role distinct from her primary one. It requires the self-conscious performance of distinct theatergrams in order to dupe an internal audience. *All's Well* emphasizes the artificiality of Diana's performance, as well as Bertram's eagerness to cast her in the role. He knows her by the working name "Fontibell" (4.2.1), which evokes an Ovidian *locus amoenus* and the erotic encounters that take place therein. His serenades derive ultimately from the *paraclausithyron* tradition, in which the locked-out lover sings to a hetaira ("Every night he comes / With musics of all sorts, and songs composed / To her unworthiness," 3.7.39–41). Bertram embraces the role of *adulescens amans*, both in his insistence that Diana is a prostitute ("a common gamester to the camp," 5.3.189) and in his view that whoring is normal and allowable in youth ("Certain it is I liked her, / And boarded her i'th' wanton way of youth," 5.3.211–12), a more permissive—and Terentian—perspective than is found in the prodigal son story, which also lies behind Bertram's misdeeds.⁴⁸ His attempt at a Terentian closure, rejecting the "prostitute" to marry a courtier's daughter (5.3.169), is brusquely dismissed.

The bed trick is not a classical motif.⁴⁹ It also appears in *Measure for Measure*, where Isabella arranges a tryst with the wicked Angelo, to which she sends his betrothed, Mariana. There is, however, nothing of the *meretrix* in Isabella, who plays a virtuous foil to the venal and licentious characters who surround her. Diana is different in part because Terence's *Hecyra* lies behind *All's Well*, providing a Terentian tonality to the scheme.⁵⁰ *Hecyra* dramatizes a similar story of an estranged husband and wife in an unconsummated marriage, a *meretrix* who entertains the husband but will not sleep with him, and a ring that enables her to restore his marriage (by proving that he, not someone else, raped his wife before their marriage). The prostitute Bacchis acts out of good will, aware of the risk to her reputation (775–76), namely, that she violates professional and generic norms alike in befriending a former lover. Diana inherits her sense of empathy (“Alas, poor lady! / ’Tis a hard bondage to become the wife / Of a detesting lord,” 3.5.63–65; cf. “he [sc. the youth] has treated me so well that I must help him as best I can” *Hec.* 760).⁵¹ Terence followed Menander in sentimentalizing and morally rehabilitating the *meretrix*. Chrysis (*And.*), Bacchis (*Heaut.*), and Thais (*Eun.*) also befriend and protect vulnerable citizen women, and Terence raises the possibility that their *ingenium* is different from that of other prostitutes (*Eun.* 198), while their profession may not be a free or even willing choice (*And.* 75–79; *Heaut.* 388–91). *All's Well* draws on this ambivalence, offering the theatergrams of a *meretrix*—association with a *miles*, the actions of extracting the ring and befriending the rival—as a secondary role, partly imposed and partly assumed, by a figure whose dedication to virtue is never in doubt. Diana, with her significant name, brings the role of Bacchis within the constraints of chastity, curbing her sexual interest in the young husband with knowledge of his faults (“If he were honest / He were much goodlier,” 3.5.80–81) and earning the essential ring without actually sharing his bed.

The muting or elimination of sexual content from Roman comic theatergrams is particularly evident in the only Plautine prostitute who appears as such in Shakespeare, the Courtesan in *Errors*.⁵² Like Erotium, she functions as a rival to Adriana, offering Antipholus of Ephesus food and entertainment in exchange for the “gift” of a golden chain, the counterpart to the *palla* that Menaechmus of Epidamnus steals from his wife. The chain, however, with its symbolic associations of bondage, status, and wealth, analogizes the wife and prostitute in ways the *palla* did not. We see Antipholus trying to bribe his way into his own house with it before it is even finished (to excuse his lateness, he begs the goldsmith to “say that I lingered with you at your shop / To see the making of her [sc. Adriana’s] carcanet,” 3.1.3–4). When refused entry, he decides to give it to the Courtesan instead (“Be it for nothing but to spite my wife,” 3.1.118). The Plautine *palla*, a reputable wife’s

personal property, signified payment only to Erotium; the gold chain is a universal currency for the hostesses of Ephesus. Of course, the Courtesan never receives it; the chain merely serves to type her as a *meretrix avara* ("Some devils ask but the pairings of one's nail. . . . But she, more covetous, would have a chain," 4.3.69, 72).

The Courtesan ostensibly plays a *meretrix* in an *uxor dotata* plot. Antipholus of Ephesus praises her as "a wench of excellent discourse, / Pretty and witty, wild and yet, too, gentle," (3.1.109–10) and implies that her house is always merry (3.1.108), in contrast to his own. Antipholus of Syracuse recognizes her profession immediately ("I charge thee, tempt me not," 4.3.46), and his servant notes that she is wearing "the habit of a light wench" (4.3.50). For the local twin, she represents escape from a shrewish and wealthy wife; for his brother, she embodies the threats of a notoriously dangerous city. Yet, as a Plautine villain she has been effectively neutered. Antipholus of Ephesus protests that he has no sexual interest in her ("This woman that I mean, / My wife—but, I protest, without desert— / Hath oftentimes upbraided me withal," 3.1.111–13), while the visiting twin rejects her in the harshest terms. Her speaking part in fact derives largely from that of the *Menaechmi* Wife. Her principal scene, 4.3, replays the quarrel between Menaechmus of Syracuse and the Wife (701–52). Both women encounter the visiting twin wearing "their" property, challenge him, and are rebuffed with a long, comic stream of abuse.⁵³ Both resent the theft ("forty ducats is too much to lose," 4.3.94; *Men.* 739–41) and eventually conclude that the man is mad (4.3.71; *Men.* 828–30). The abuse in *Errors* focuses on the Courtesan's supposed witchcraft, in keeping with the play's larger theme of losing one's soul. What derives from *Menaechmi* is the intensity and license of the abuse, the basic structure of the scene, and the substitution of the Courtesan for the Wife.

Errors limits the Courtesan's influence and subjects her to the same victimization and rejection as the Wife; both receive a perfunctory dismissal at the end of the play. There is a perceptible shift in the Courtesan's allegiance, in preparation for her eventual parting from Antipholus, when she reports his madness to the women. In the scene where Antipholus of Ephesus is bound and carried off (4.4), the three women form a kind of chorus, responding to the spectacle with identical emotions of fear and concern ([Luciana] "Alas, how fiery and how sharp he looks!" / [Courtesan] "Mark how he trembles in his ecstasy!" 4.4.50–51; [Adriana] "Oh, bind him, bind him! Let him not come near me," 4.4.106). Differences of temperament and social status are downplayed here. Whereas the *Menaechmi* drew a subtle comparison between the prostitute and the wife, depicting both as financial burdens, *Errors* negates the potential harm from either. In the end, all Antipholus claims to have had from the Courtesan is "good cheer" (5.1.393), and the chain

ends up in the right household. Adriana is not, ultimately, an *uxor dotata*, nor is the Courtesan a *meretrix mala*.

This chapter has explored theatergrams associated with Roman comic *meretrices* in Shakespeare. These are more prevalent than is usually acknowledged, though rarely as theatergrams of person. Shakespeare purged the bawdiness of his Roman sources, resulting in a significant reduction in the roles overtly played by prostitutes. *Meretrix*-related theatergrams are typically constructs by other characters (Beatrice's supposed infatuation, for example), self-consciously adopted behaviors for short-term ends (such as Diana's liaison with Bertram or Hero's duping of Beatrice), or functions of a comic situation (Adriana's "infidelity" or Olivia's retinue). Rarely are there analogues as direct as the Courtesan, and even this role is stripped of sexual behavior and overwritten with material from the Wife. The Roman *meretrix* is read through the filter of Terentian humanism, even when the source is distinctively and recognizably Plautine, such as the *Miles* adultery scheme. There is an emphasis on the virtue of the women who perform *meretrix* theatergrams, including a concern for the welfare of others and a reluctance to engage in the economic exploitation of lovers.

NOTES

1. On the reception of Terence, including the plays of Hrotsvit of Gandersheim, see Augoustakis and Traill 2013, part 4, *Reception*.
2. Baldwin 1944; Augoustakis and Traill 2013, 715. Burrow (2004, 10), among others, acknowledges that this is now "effectively an orthodoxy" in Shakespeare studies. See, for example, Gillespie 2001, 412–21 (Plautus) and 480–87 (Terence).
3. Baldwin 1947, 544, 559.
4. Baldwin 1947, 573–74 (acting in school); Burrow 2004, 13 (double translation).
5. Quotation from Riehle 1990, 16.
6. Baldwin 1947, 576 (Terence canon); Gillespie 2001, 415 (Plautus).
7. Miola 1999, 183. Burrow (2004, 15–16) identifies creative aspects to misremembering, in the context of sixteenth-century humanist education. Like Miola (1999, 180), he notes that the practice of creating commonplace books encouraged readers to combine sources in ways that could obscure their origins (18–19).
8. Clubb 1989, a revision of Clubb 1986.
9. Clubb 1989, 6.
10. Satyrus, *Vita Eur.*, *P. Oxy.* 9.1176 fr. 39.7, lines 8–22; *Amph.* 59.
11. Roman comic influence is also noticeable in figures derived from the lost daughter (*puella expositicia*) and variants—Marina, Perdita, Miranda, Bianca (*Taming*), and Jessica—though there is insufficient space to treat these here; see Miola 1994.

12. Hosley 1966, 139, in contrast to Italian comedy; Riehle 1990, 19. The few actual prostitutes in Shakespeare play small roles: the *Menaechmi*-derived Courtesan in *Errors* (discussed later in the chapter), Bianca (*Othello*), Phrynia and Timandra (*Timon*), and Doll Tearsheet (*Henry IV.2*). See B. A. Melchiori 1997.

13. Plautus citations are from Lindsay 1990; Terence, from Kauer and Lindsay 1961; Shakespeare, from Bevington 2009.

14. On Plautine eavesdropping, see Slater 2000, 133–36; and Franko 2004, 31–33.

15. Traill 2005.

16. Miola 1994, 84–88. This was a significant challenge to the *communis opinio*, represented, e.g., by Bevington (2009, A-29): “for the Beatrice-Benedick plot, no source has been discovered, apart from Shakespeare’s own earlier fascination with wit-combat and candid wooing in *Love’s Labours Lost* and *Taming of the Shrew*.” Mares (2003, 6–7) cites Lyly and Castiglione (following Bullough 1958, 79) as distant sources for the duping scheme.

17. Miola 1994, 84–85.

18. She occupies herself with blaming Beatrice, not discussing “how Benedick is sick in love” (3.1.20–21) as intended. Likewise, Acroteleutium was hired to pretend to be eager for an affair, not on the brink of suicide.

19. Miola (1994, 86) sees a naturalistic growth “to relative complexity” in this scene—evidence that Hero is not “flat and insubstantial”—cf. Mares 2003, 35 (“all docility and propriety”) or McEachern 2006, 42 (“she is silent in the presence of men, and pert in that of women—the discrepancy instances Shakespeare’s psychological realism”)—whereas I emphasize the discrepancy between her romantic and comic models (not that this excludes an organic reading of the character).

20. Lines 955, 990, 995. See Fantham 1972, 113 on the image.

21. 3.1 is not from the French and Italian sources for the Hero-Claudio plot, whose resemblance to Chariton was first noted by Weichberger in 1898, cited in Mares 2003, 111. Direct influence is unlikely: the *editio princeps* did not appear until 1750 (Furness 1899, 345); Gesner (1970, 64) attributes it to derived tradition. (My thanks to David Konstan for pointing this out.)

22. Cf., *Mil.* 1032–33: *miseram cruciari et lacrumantem se adflictare, / quia tis egeat*.

23. Ophelia’s suicide is accidental; Lady MacBeth’s, Goneril’s, and (arguably) Gertrude’s are from criminal guilt.

24. Miola (1994, 85) notes this parallel.

25. On the motif of female suicide in comedy, see Dutsch 2012, 195.

26. See, e.g., Clubb, who describes contamination and complication as “the essential principles of Cinquecento comedy” (1989, 6–7) or “even when he follows a source closely, Shakespeare reads eclectically, dipping into other texts and books, creating subordinate plot lines, adding characters and themes” (73). On Benedick as a *miles gloriosus*, see Miola 1994, 84–85. The motif is prominent in his early scenes with Beatrice (e.g., 1.1.42, 1.1.120) but downplayed in the eavesdropping scene.

27. Milphidippa, who also “loved” the soldier, arguably already doubled Acroteleutium. Mrs. Page, too, serves as a doublet and an ancillary (Miola 1994, 108).

28. Noted by M. C. Bradbrook, p. 86 (cited in G. Melchiori 2000, 15), “The Italian works . . . all are tales of *youthful* and *successful* adultery” (original italics). On the play’s sources, see Bullough 1958, 3–58; and G. Melchiori 2000, 13–14. Falstaff is routinely compared to a *miles gloriosus*, though he combines other types (Lord of Misrule, morality play Vice, parasite, clever slave [Miola 1999, 180–81]) and *senex amans* (Riehle 1990, 225), perhaps too many to claim any single model (Doran 1964, 159). There are no actual adulteries in Roman comedy except for *Amphitruo*, which derives from a separate tradition of mythological travesty. On this play, cf. Dutsch and Cinaglia and Konstan in this volume.

29. This is quite unlike *Mil.* 1275: *tecum uiuere uult atque aetatem exigere* (she wants to live and spend her life with you).

30. Riehle (1990, 225–26) compares her role as go-between to Mercury’s, in *Amphitruo*.

31. The play’s debt to *Menaechmi* was recognized as early as 1602 (Bullough 1958, 269–70). Salingar (1986, 74–77) and Miola (1994, 38–61) identify numerous borrowings: the errors plot, *anagnorisis*, two-house setting, and visiting twin’s adventures.

32. 778: *omnis se . . . sectari in Epheso memorat mulieres*, quoted by Riehle (1990, 232).

33. First noted by Salingar (1986, 76–77); see also Riehle (1990, 233–34). Smith (2001, 280–81) describes it as a “house of Misrule,” as does Gay (2003, 9), with a highly anomalous (for Elizabethan England) female head. There are also parallels between Olivia and Melitte in *Clitophon and Leucippe* (Gesner 1970, 56–57).

34. Miola (1994, 44–45, 48) recognizes Sir Andrew as a *miles gloriosus* but treats Maria as a *servus callidus*; Vandiver (1935, 422–23) first identified Sir Toby as a *parasitus*.

35. As Miola notes, “to Hero’s supposed Thais, Claudio plays Phaedria, the locked-out *adulescens* of *Eunuchus*” (1994, 88).

36. *ut ego unguibus facile illi in oculos inuolem.*

37. *Phorm.* 792: *uirum me natam uellem.*

38. Riehle (1990, 56) discusses the resemblance. King (2004, 24) compares her dialogue with Luciana in 2.1 to Lucian, *Dial. Meretr.* 3 (a hetaira arguing with her mother), another *meretrix* motif. Luciana’s name can be taken as a reference to Lucian; see Riehle 1990, 240; and Maguire 1997, 369. On the sources of *Errors*, see also Bullough 1957, 1–54; and Baldwin 1965.

39. Noted by many, e.g., Baldwin (1928, 78); Brooks (1960, 352).

40. See Christenson 2000, ad 504–5, 655–57, 289–90.

41. Fr. i Lindsay 3.1.80: *at ego te cruce et cruciatu mactabo, mastigia* (I will destroy you with the cross and torture, you scoundrel!).

42. 4.4.101; cf. fr. x Lindsay: *quae me apsepte corpus uolgaui suom* (who prostituted herself in my absence).

43. Baldwin (1947, 670) identifies Lambinus’s as the “logical edition” for Shakespeare to have used; contra Riehle 1990, 90. There were some thirty-seven editions of Plautus by 1578 (Hutson 2007, 158n22, citing T. Howard-Hill).

44. This is briefly noted by Baldwin (1965, 78).
45. *qui in hanc urbem pedem / nisi hodie numquam intro tetulit.*
46. Compare *Men.* 381 *delicias facis* (you are joking) with *Errors* 2.2.167–68 and *Men.* 396 *qui lubet ludibrio habere me* (he enjoys making fun of me) with *Errors* 2.2.202–4.
47. Baldwin (1965, 80–81) has shown that this is a substitution, not a mistranslation. On the symbolism of the chain, see Henze 1971.
48. The *adulescens amans* behind Bertram is “a character type largely defined by ego-centric desire and practical helplessness” (Clubb 1989, 93), whereas the prodigal son (also evident here; see Miola 1994, 137) confesses and repents. For a more comic attitude than the courtier Lafew’s, cf. *Hec.* 744.
49. The trick, which may be traced to Genesis 29:23, came into vogue in the early seventeenth century: Desens (1994, 143–51) identifies forty-four examples, most postdating *Much Ado*. The New Comic prototypes—esp. *Epitrepontes* and *Hecyra*—identified by Leggatt (2003, 2–3) and others (q.v., n. 1) model the situation (sex between “strangers” who later marry) more than the actual trick (neither involves deliberate deception). The closest parallel, apart perhaps from *Amphitruo*, is Cephalus and Procris, Hyg. *Fab.* 189.8.
50. On *Hecyra* as a “deep source” for *All’s Well*, see Miola 1994, 131–36.
51. *meritu’s* [sc. Pamphilus] *de me est quod queam illi ut commodem.*
52. Already noted by Gill: “Shakespeare . . . has given to his play a higher moral tone than that of the Latin comedies, as exemplified in his giving the courtesan a very minor role” (1930, 64). See also Wells 1972, 18–19.
53. Cf. “Is that the chain you promised me today?” 4.3.45, and *Men.* 708–9: *non te pudet prodire in conspectum meum cum istoc ornatu?* (Are you not ashamed to appear in front of me in this costume?)

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The Triumph of Juno in Antônio José da Silva's *Anfitrião, ou Júpiter e Alcmene*

RODRIGO TADEU GONÇALVES

This chapter analyzes the construction and function of female characters, and the figure of Juno in particular, in *Anfitrião, ou Júpiter e Alcmene* (1736), a puppet opera based on Plautus's *Amphitruo* by the Brazilian Portuguese playwright Antônio José da Silva. I begin with a brief discussion of Silva's life and the genre in which he composed. I provide an overview of the main points regarding the plot, focusing on female characters and their theatrical and metatheatrical functions. In doing so, I defend the hypothesis that Silva's *Anfitrião* is a particular kind of rewriting of Plautus's *Amphitruo*, one that centers on its female figures, and Juno especially, through a doubling of the basic Plautine plot.

Widely known in Portuguese as "O Judeu" (The Jew), Silva lived during the troubled reign of D. João V (1705–50), an era marked by the strong influence of the Holy Office (the "Tribunal do Santo Ofício" of the Inquisition). The office's powerful grip over Portugal and its colonies impeded the spread of the European Enlightenment through the country, still darkened by Scholastic and Baroque tendencies in the arts, religion, music, and education. In the early eighteenth century, the playwright's New Christian family lived in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where he was born in 1705.¹ His parents were denounced by the Inquisition in 1711 and sent to prison in Lisbon. Thereafter, Silva spent most of his life in Lisbon, where, from 1722 to 1726, he completed the course of "Cânones" at the university in Coimbra. In 1726, he was denounced by the Inquisition and went to prison for

the first time on August 8, 1726. There, he was tortured and denounced by many relatives and accepted the terms of the Inquisition.² On October 3, 1737, a warrant for his arrest was issued after the family slave Leonor Gomes denounced the family. He was arrested on October 5 and remained in prison until he was garroted and burned at the auto-da-fé, the ritual of public penance, on October 18, 1739. Nowhere, however, in the documents of the Holy Office do we have any reference to Silva's operas. Thus, it seems that the subversive character of his theatrical work was probably not recognized at the time.³

His eight operas, sometimes defined as *joco-sérias*, tragicomedies, were performed anonymously in a popular comic theater house in the Bairro Alto neighborhood of Lisbon from 1733 to 1737. They were published posthumously by Francisco Luis Ameno in his *Theatro Comico Portuguez* in 1744, still anonymously.⁴ The characters were played by cork-and-wire marionettes called *bonifrates*.

Antônio José da Silva's *Anfitrião*: Genre and Heritage

Silva's comic operas represent a confluence of different traditions. Theater in Portugal at the time was influenced primarily by the traditions of the Spanish golden age. He drew on the older tradition of commedia dell'arte along with Italian opera (which reached Portugal around 1730), as well as Classical and Renaissance plots, including the work of Plautus.⁵ The reception of Plautus's *Amphitruo* has gained attention recently among classical scholars, but Silva's work has yet to be considered fully. Örjan Lindberger produced a study of the reception of *Amphitruo* in 1956, and at least three important books on the subject have been published in recent years: *Amphitryon ou la question de l'Autre* (Margotton and Huby-Gilson 2010), *Sosia e il doppio nel teatro moderno* (Bertini 2010), and *Amphitryon, un mythe théâtral* (Ferry 2011). Among these scholars, only Lindberger and Ferruccio Bertini mention Antônio José's *Anfitrião*.

Flávia Maria Corradin (1998) has demonstrated Silva's intertextual relationship with three specific plays: Plautus's *Amphitruo*, Luís de Camões's *Auto dos Enfatriões* (1587), and Molière's *Amphitryon* ([1668] 1953). The puppet opera draws on Plautus for its basic plot and many scenes, while incorporating particular aspects of Camões's lyric treatment of love and borrowing the structure of doubling the actions of the nobler characters in those of the servile characters. These features demonstrate that Silva knew these plays and worked with them directly. One particular influence for *Anfitrião, ou Júpiter e Alcmena*, however, is often overlooked.⁶ The main innovation in Silva's version, namely, the introduction of Juno as a furious and jealous goddess and Tirésias as prime minister of Thebes,⁷ whom the

goddess manipulates in a conspiracy to kill Alcmena, can be traced to an obscure treatment of the theme: Francesco Gasparini's Italian opera *Anfitrione* (1707), with libretto by Pietro Pariati. In this opera, Giunone, disguised as Dorida, princess of the Teleboans, plays a similar role in trying to convince Creonte (here, "chief of Thebes") to take revenge on Alcmena and Anfitrione.⁸ It is probable that Silva not only knew Gasparini's opera but also transposed its basic idea.⁹ This is an important detail that, in itself, puts in a new perspective certain claims about the absolute originality of Silva's treatment of Juno.¹⁰

Anfitrião, ou Júpiter e Alcmena: A Baroque Tragicomedy

Anfitrião is a very long opera, with fourteen scenes divided into two parts. While the first part closely follows the plot of Plautus's play, the second part is quite innovative: it can be seen as a new, original plot determined by the goddess Juno in her quest for revenge. Thus, Juno and Íris are important new additions to the models, since Júpiter's jealous wife brings the nymph with her as a maidservant, corresponding to Alcmena and Cornucópia (Saramago's wife, absent in Plautus, but partly inspired by Camões's Brômia and partly by Molière's Cléanthis). Subsequently, the opera makes frequent use of the doubling and/or inversion of the love triangle of the nobler characters and the inversion of the master-servant relationship.¹¹ In general terms, the plot is a complex mixture of the Plautine model with labyrinthine additions of characters and situations. Essentially, Júpiter takes Anfitrião's place in order to be with Alcmena, and Mercúrio takes Saramago's place in order to help his father, while also participating in another love triangle: Alcmena's maid, Cornucópia, is eager to see her husband back from the war, but before seeing Saramago, she encounters Mercúrio, who shuns her. Therefore, when Saramago comes on stage, his wife does not welcome him, and he, rejected by his wife, falls in love with Íris. Tirésias, the head of the Theban senate, falls in love with Juno and becomes the agent of her vengeance. These events are all framed by Juno's thirst for revenge, and the plot culminates in a complex ending: Alcmena will be charged as an adulteress and almost executed, while Anfitrião and Saramago are imprisoned. Only the *deus ex machina* at the conclusion of the play can prevent its tragic ending and lead to its happy resolution. Silva is thus able to play with multiple binary tensions: classical plot and his own innovative writing, human and divine perspectives, upper- and lower-register characters, male and female aspirations to power.

While numerous instances of romantic *quid pro quo* result from the introduction of Íris and Cornucópia, it is the character of Juno that transforms the

Plautine plot in the most remarkable fashion. Juno loves her husband and desires the elimination of her rival; she describes her intentions in frankly metatheatrical terms as the “machinery of revenge.” Her vengeful actions are meant to alleviate her humiliation. Even if, in the end, she cannot carry out her revenge and have Alcmena, Anfitrião, and Saramago killed, she will be content with exposing her husband’s plans.

Women, Agency, Metatheater, and Power: A Case Study

I now turn to the construction of female characters. Because this play’s plot is long and complicated, it requires significant exposition.¹² After the first scene between Mercúrio and Júpiter,¹³ in which Júpiter claims to be overpowered by the “incurable suffering” of love, the second scene depicts Alcmena as a tender and submissive wife.¹⁴ Her opening dialogue with her maidservant, Cornucópia, most explicitly illustrates this role: here Alcmena is not like her Plautine model, who, in Dutsch’s words, is a “contradiction in terms” (2008, 153–56), divided between *voluptas* and *virtus*, female desire and male virtue, but rather like a submissive Portuguese woman, “lírica e saudosa” (Corradin 1998, 181), emphasizing the Portuguese notion of *saudade*.¹⁵ The following exchange most clearly illustrates this difference in characterization (33):¹⁶

Cornucopia: Lady Alcmena, I never thought you were so given to extremes, or that you would take your sorrows so much to heart.

Alcmena: Cornucopia, if you could feel the pain of absence, you would find my emotion rather too small. No sooner had I achieved the delights of most blessed marriage in Amphitryon’s arms than Mars carried him out of my sight to the Telebian war. But oh, dear Amphitryon, if you went off to war, you left me fighting a greater one, for in the clash of memories and the repeated blows of longing I am left almost breathless.

The dialogue represents well the nature of the opposition between servant and master: Cornucópia will be a *graciosa* in the play, and Alcmena disdains her incapacity to feel emotion. The “war of longing” here inverts the importance of martial glory and virtue, and Alcmena can only feel her own pain of intense yearning. The maid uses language in a particularly performative way, as *logos-pharmakon*.¹⁷ Her speech is intended to cure Alcmena of the disease of love (35):

Cornucopia: I'm saying all this just to see if your longing can be soothed a little.

Alcmena: This pain cannot be cured by words. Leave me, Cornucopia, for my sorrow can find relief only in weeping.

Since Júpiter, disguised as Anfitrião, has not yet arrived, Alcmena sinks more deeply into extreme sorrow, unconsciously foreshadowing the doubling of her husband in an uncannily mimetic proposition (35):

Darling Amphitryon, since cruel absence makes it impossible for me to see you, I wish to reproduce your image in the tears that I cry; since they are the daughters of love, perhaps I may find you in them.

Her tears actually anticipate the arrival of her “husband,” because an image of her husband, Júpiter, actually comes right away. A scene of pathetic greeting follows, during which Alcmena introduces a curious twist to the myth (41):

Alcmena: I just noticed, Amphitryon, that before your absence I never heard such flowery expressions, and when I feared that the war might make you less tender, I find instead that it has made you more loving. It seems to me that you have come rather from the school of Cupid than the camp-talk of Mars.

His ironic answer already hints at another important twist present in Molière's version (*Amph.*, act I, scene 3), namely, the strong opposition between lover and husband, to be developed further at a later point in the play (43):

Jupiter: . . . Alcmena, then suppose that I am not that former Amphitryon, but rather a different and more loving Amphitryon.

The couple then leaves the stage to the lower characters Cornucópia and Mercúrio, disguised as Saramago. This is the first instance of the device employed by Molière (cf. act I, scene 3) and used several times in Silva's play: a kind of repetition or doubling of the same scene, but in a different mode, when the servants invert the speech and actions of the nobler characters, transposing them to a comic lower tone. Cornucópia also wishes to welcome back a loving husband, but her tone is generally much less affected, much more down-to-earth. She displays a liberal and joyful kind of love, free from the pathos and verbosity of the love between Alcmena and Júpiter (47):

Cornucopia: Now then! My handsome husband, my darling Saramago, it's time to squeeze each other until we pop; come here, you jewel, you living doll, I want to wrap you up and tuck you into my heart.

Mercury: Instead of all that soppy stuff, wouldn't it be better if you gave me some dinner? I'm starving to death, and words don't make soup.

"Words don't make soup" comically inverts her previous use of *logos-pharmakon*: while Cornucopia explicitly states that she uses language performatively to soothe Alcmena (cited above), Mercúrio undercuts her words of warm welcome with a cold refusal of their performative powers. This radical inversion of roles is thus reinforced with an intensification of the distinction between the conceptions of love and marriage as conceived by the nobler and the lower characters (47):

Cornucopia: Our master must have been pretty hungry too, and despite that he kept saying so many sweet things to our mistress that it would have melted a stone.

When Juno appears for the first time, she descends in a cloud with Íris to reveal her intentions in the play (81):

Juno: What good does it do me to be the goddess Juno, wife to Jupiter, if that very husband, that very Jupiter, with his naughty plans seeks to eclipse the light of my sovereignty, taking the shape of Amphitryon to win the favors of Alcmena? And so, to take my revenge on both of them, disguised in this human shape, I will fight to avenge my wrong and soothe my jealousy. Oh, how sacrilegious is the torment of jealousy, for not even the gods themselves are exempt from its fury!

Iris: Sovereign Juno, such an emotion seems unfit for your divinity; and since, even though I am in disguise, I am still the nymph Iris, symbol of concord, now more than ever you will see the effects of my power, calming with my influence the flood-tide of your woes.

Juno intends to avenge Júpiter's adulteries in order to "soothe" her extreme jealousy. From her first speech she is aware of Júpiter's plans to disguise himself as Anfitrião, although she cannot always distinguish the two. Júpiter and Mercúrio, on the other hand, have no idea of her presence until the final scene, and their ignorance tips the balance of power in her favor. Juno's plot will work as the "machinery of her revenge" (81): "Jupiter will see the damage I will do to him,

making a mockery of his power and winning out with the machinations of my revenge.” Íris, in turn, is responsible for alleviating Juno’s unhappiness with *blanda verba*, thus doubling the characterization of Cornucópia and Alcmena in scene 1. Because she is the goddess of concord, however, Íris’s role becomes significantly more complex when she ironically creates discord among the lower characters.

The next scene begins with an imitation of the farewell scene in Plautus (*Amph.* 499–544), modified with Molière’s innovation (vv. 618–21), namely, the distinction between lover and husband (87):

Alcmena: This love is born from my duty.

Jupiter: Well, I would rather that your sweetness were born more out of your love than your sense of duty.

Alcmena: The duty of loving one’s husband goes beyond all other duties.

Jupiter: I would be more gratified if you could love me more as a lover than as a husband.

Alcmena: I don’t know how to make that distinction, for I cannot love you as a husband without loving you as a lover.

The innovation here lies in the character of Alcmena, whose love is driven by “duty.” Júpiter, as a *discreto*,¹⁸ wittily introduces the separation of what he has united by his deceit. Cornucópia responds to Alcmena with a clever remark, typical of her role as *graciosa*,¹⁹ providing further evidence of the symmetrical opposition between master and maidservant in their views of marriage, love, and life (87):

Cornucopia: Oh, my lady, Lord Amphitryon is quite right, for there is a big difference between a husband and a lover.

Alcmena: I wish I knew what it could be, for I have never experienced it.

Cornucopia: Ask my husband Radishweed [= “Saramago”] about it, my lady, for he’s gone so far away from being a lover for me that I regard him as no more than a bogus husband. A husband who’s not a lover is like a body without a soul! What does it matter if marriage connects the bodies if love doesn’t unite the souls?

There soon follows the first encounter of Juno and Íris with Alcmena and Cornucópia. Juno presents herself as a suppliant and begins to tell her story, claiming that her name is Felizarda (Lucky) and that she was born near Mount Olympus. She also says that she was allowed to choose her husband, whom she describes as a “gallant lad, strong and very youthful” (93). Her story is quite strange because it mixes facts about her true identity (e.g., the lad is actually Júpiter) and

her first disguise. She is immediately interrupted by the arrival of the true Anfitrião and Saramago, and she does not get to finish her story until the final scene.

The first encounter between the true Anfitrião and Alcmena portrays the husband full of rage and animosity (107):²⁰

Alcmena: What are you so unhappy about? Did I do wrong in venerating you as my husband?

Amphitryon: Silence, betrayer, enemy, for I was not the one who lay down with you on the blessed bridal bed.

Immediately following their quarrel, the lower characters enact an inversion of this same scene. Saramago first meets Cornucópia and acts as a loving husband, but she shuns him on account of her earlier encounter with Mercúrio. Saramago speaks as a *gracioso* and inverts Anfitrião's wrath against Alcmena in a metatheatrical justification for not being violent toward his wife (115):

Radishweed: I'm saying, you liar, that, if it were not that it would give this a tragic ending, right here and now I'd gore you on the horn of this sword to pay you back for the horns you put on me.

Cornucopia: What would you kill me for? Because I was with my husband?

This kind of attitude and inverted rhetorical level of speech will be a constant feature of the interactions between Saramago and Cornucópia. After a scene in which Saramago tries to reconcile himself with Cornucópia, whose face is repeatedly transformed by Mercúrio's powers (117–23), there follows an inversion of attitudes: while Cornucópia accepts peace, Saramago now wants to kill her with a sword. His anger causes Cornucópia to flee just before Íris enters. Saramago is immediately attracted to Íris, disguised as Corriola, the maidservant of Felizarda. Íris tries to manipulate him and find out which of the two Anfitriões is the true one (125).

The next scene contains a short dialogue between Júpter and Mercúrio, in which the latter warns the former that Juno could come to know of their adventure. An authoritarian declaration demonstrates Júpter's lack of concern for any possible opposition (133):²¹

Jupiter: Jupiter is more powerful than Juno; and I will make her suffer from the same deception; for she cannot do anything but what I choose that she can.

Most scenes in the second part of Silva's play are radical innovations of the Plautine plot. The action is now mostly driven by Juno, creating a double plot in relation to the basic story line of its models (cf. Corradin 1998, 166–67). Juno's first speech in the first scene is a declaration of her intentions to avenge herself, driven by the "poison" of her jealousy (143):

Juno: . . . Let the poison of my jealousy begin to infect the cause of my envy: let the innocence of Alcmena weep for the crime of Jupiter; for he is so well disguised in the shape of Amfitrion that not all my divinity can tell which is the genuine one. Oh, Jupiter, why did you give me the glory of being your wife, if you will not free me from this hell of jealousy?

Iris: My lady, slowly but surely.

Repeating the pattern of mistress-maid previously employed, Íris uses a popular proverb to soothe her mistress' jealousy. Tirésias then appears and sees Juno for the first time, falling in love with her on sight. After he delivers a highly rhetorical *discreto's* speech to prove his love (147), Juno interrupts him and invents a second disguise for herself: now she claims that her name is Flérida, daughter of Téleba (the king of the Teleboans), and that she had come to Thebes disguised as Felizarda only to take revenge on Anfitrião and Alcmena. She offers him "a wife and a kingdom" (151) in exchange for his help in exacting her revenge.²² Tirésias, however, finds it difficult to accept that Alcmena must also be punished for Anfitrião's murder of Téleba, in response to which Juno gives an impressive justification: Alcmena is also a murderer of his memory (149), because, while Anfitrião murdered his body, her happy life with her husband would defame him forever. Juno's power turns Tirésias into an agent of her vengeance: "Since Tiresias is so captivated by my beauty, he will be the means of my revenge" (145). After they leave the stage, Júpiter comes to apologize to Alcmena in a scene in which Juno is the most important addition.²³ She arrives in the middle of the confusion and, seeing that the alleged Anfitrião is really Júpiter, begins to use her *pharmakon* and poison Alcmena's mind with her *logos-pharmakon*: "Certainly, if he had done this to me, I would never see him again: for he stated, no less, that you were betraying his trust" (167).

Alcmena forgives Júpiter after he sings an effusive aria, threatening to kill himself, and they exit together.²⁴ Again, we see a distinctive Portuguese characterization of love and submission in this Alcmena, quite different from the Alcmena of Plautus, who states that it was not proper (*oportuit ne diceret*) for her husband to act in this manner, but that she must accept his apologies (*patiunda sunt, Amph.* 937.945–6):

JUP. . . . iam nunc irata non es?

ALC. non sum.

JUP. bene facis. . . .

ALC. primum cavisse oportuit ne diceres,
verum eadem si idem purgas mi, patiunda sunt.

JUP. . . . You aren't angry any longer, are you?

ALC. No, I'm not angry.

JUP. Thank you. . . .

ALC. You ought to have been careful not to say such a thing in the first
place, but if you apologize to me for it, I'll have to bear it. (Plautus 2011, 107)

Silva's representation of this interaction is quite different: when Júpiter and Anfitrião meet for the first time, Juno enters to finish the story left incomplete in part 1 but, seeing the confusion, tries to pervert Alcmena's mind so that she may shun both husbands (191: "Alcmena, do what I tell you and leave these madmen here"). Anfitrião and Júpiter start a duel, during which Alcmena faints. The fainting causes the male characters to leave in order to retrieve some medicine, and the women on stage manage to revive Alcmena. Juno for the first time shows compassion, when she is incapable of taking advantage of the occasion to kill Alcmena as Íris suggests (199):

Juno: (*aside*) To think that I should have to show compassion for the one
who is wronging me! Oh, what good fortune for me, Alcmena, if you
were never to recover from this swoon!

Iris: As the one who is wronging you has fallen into your hands, take
your revenge now.

Juno: My vengeance must be plain to see.

As on other occasions, the scene acted out by the nobler characters is immediately followed by a travesty enacted by the lower characters. Cornucópia and Mercúrio are joined by Saramago, producing a doubling of the attempted recognition followed by a duel. Unlike Alcmena in the previous "serious" scene, Cornucópia faints deliberately (225):

Cornucopia: (*aside*) There's no way to stop this except by fainting as
Alcmena did. (*aloud*) Help me, gentlemen, I'm fainting. [She faints.]

Saramago: Oh, no. Cornucopia's passed out too, like Alcmena. Sir, let's
have a truce so as to bury this body.

The scene takes on a grotesque character with a discussion of the appropriateness of fainting for old maidservants (cf. 227: Mercurio: “Fainting spells are for ladies, not for dragons”), creating different representations of gender according to social status: a poor woman is not allowed to faint.

The remaining scenes are radical departures from their models. In scenes 4 and 5, the plot thickens as a result of Juno’s actions. While Alcmena is alone by a fountain in the garden, the goddess leads Júpiter, Anfitrião, and Tirésias to her, each armed with sword in hand. After instigating Júpiter against Alcmena, she says: “Even if my advice comes to nothing, at least I am easing my pain!” (231). As she is convincing Tirésias too to follow Alcmena, Saramago eavesdrops on their conversation. The dialogue Saramago overhears is central to the goddess’s plans. Juno presses Tirésias to fulfill his promise and kill Alcmena, and what is more, thanks to her particular powers, Juno notices Saramago’s presence and uses her divine abilities to turn him into an olive tree, so that he cannot reveal her plans to Alcmena and Anfitrião—another display of her cruelty in adopting every means possible for her revenge.

As a tree, Saramago will be beaten by Cornucópia and Mercúrio and later will have a ten-line stanza carved in his trunk by Júpiter-in-love, until the god recognizes the slave and transforms him back to his former shape. Then, still hurting and bruised, he is left alone onstage, and Íris enters. Trying to take advantage of the situation, Íris is about to ask Saramago who the true Anfitrião is when Mercúrio comes onstage. Saramago flees, and Mercúrio promises Íris that he will reveal to her the true Anfitrião.

Shortly thereafter, Júpiter, Anfitrião, and Tirésias, seeking to kill Alcmena, find her alone in the garden. Alcmena cries for help, and all the other characters appear, with the exception of Saramago. A confused attempt at identifying the true Anfitrião is resolved by Mercúrio, who accuses Anfitrião of being an impostor and of having bribed him to pretend to be Saramago. This fake confession will serve to frame Saramago, and the guilt of Anfitrião is proven by the mention of the triumph attended by Júpiter (when Tirésias first entered in act 1, scene 4, he was looking for the real Anfitrião for the triumph over the recent victory, but in scene 6 he ended up finding Júpiter, who took the general’s place in the triumph that ended part 1). Saramago arrives late to warn Alcmena of what he had previously overheard, and Mercúrio leaves the stage so that the servant can be arrested, in consequence of his false confession. Juno reminds Tirésias of his promise to punish Alcmena as well for treating both figures as her husband. Alcmena becomes confused by what she perceives to be Felizarda’s change of sides and tries to defend herself with her personal version of the truth (273):

Alcmena: Tiresias, what are you saying? Must I pay for another's deception?

Tiresias: If your crime is proven, there is no option but death.

Alcmena: As the heart distinguishes among misdeeds, I do not deserve to die: for in my heart I always took to be my husband that man who really seemed so genuine.

Tiresias: Regarding hearts and inward feelings, only the supreme gods are judges; we, their ministers on earth, pass sentence only by what we see on the outside.

Tirésias's justice can judge only the outside, not feelings or intentions. Here we touch the central point of doubling: Alcmena defends herself for believing external appearances, that is, Júpiter's momentary proposed identity, that of Anfitrião. The double could never be the same as or equal to the doubled one—he could only seem to be. Tirésias, now in the world of doubles, acts accordingly, passing sentence based on appearances, which he believes to be based on the truth. Nothing like this is found in Plautus.²⁵ The almost tragic conflict between human and divine justice probably alludes to the thorny problem of the arbitrary justice exerted by the members of the Holy Office, since, although they could indict, judge, and condemn anyone for appearances, they would never accept the same defense from the accused.²⁶ The scene ends with the imprisonment of Anfitrião and Saramago.

When Anfitrião and Saramago go to jail, Juno appears to rescue them.²⁷ Once again, we see how Juno manipulates the other characters in order to set her “machinery of revenge” in motion—this time, through corruption (301):

Full of compassion for your innocence, I have come to free you from this prison; to that end I have bribed the guards, and everything is ready: for it is not right that, being as you are the genuine Amphytrion, you should suffer, though innocent, while the other, fake one is left unpunished.

This strange act of kindness by Juno is actually a part of her revenge, because what she really wants is for Anfitrião to watch the execution of his wife.

The final scene, which takes place in the temple of Júpiter, begins with Tirésias leading Alcmena to her execution. Her words display a tragic tone (305):

Alcmena: Is it possible that I still have life, seeing that I must lose it without guilt, without offense, without crime?

When Júpiter finally decides to put an end to it all, the scene changes to his Empyrean hall,²⁸ and he sings as *deus ex machina*. The effect of his song is so powerful that it changes the disposition of the main characters: Anfitrião and Alcmena are reconciled, as if by magic, and Juno's wrath is appeased (313):

Amphitryon: Oh, a thousand times blessed am I, who have had the good fortune that Jupiter himself should have deigned to lend his divinity to my lucky marriage bed.

Alcmena: I have gone in one moment from the greatest woe to the greatest joy! Amphitryon, my husband, give me your congratulations for so much happiness.

Amphitryon: Let them be mutual, dear Alcmena: for, when even your offenses are glorious for me, what will it be like when you do not offend?

Radishweed: I've always heard tell that Lord Jupiter was a fierce thunderer.

Juno: Now at last my heart will be at peace.

Subsequently, the gods reveal their identities, during which exchange Juno can finally complete the tale she began in part 1 (313):

Juno: Listen to me first! Alcmena, so that my story may not be left unfinished, know that that handsome and youthful swain, resident on Mt. Olympus, is Jupiter, whom you see here, and I am the goddess Juno, his wife, who, jealous, came to your house to pry him out of your arms. Since I have now achieved that, I will go to the arms of my husband. And so, Tiresias, being who I am, I could hardly keep the word I gave you, which was only for the purpose of taking revenge on Alcmena.

Curiously, no other character judges Juno for her plot against every character in the opera except Júpiter, who reveals what he thinks of his wife: "Only Juno could conspire so cruelly against Alcmena" (313).

A Female *Anfitrião*?

The hybrid aesthetics of Silva's *Anfitrião*, with its interplay of binary opposites, offers a unique opportunity to examine the interface of gender and power. We seem to have a basic structure in which female characters dominate the whole

opera. In this sense, Alcmena and Juno are protagonist and antagonist. Alcmena dominates part 1, and Juno dominates part 2. Each has a servant who works with actions and words (*blanda verba* and *pharmaka*) to help her mistress. Let us first consider the two servants.

Cornucópia is a *graciosa*, a particular kind of *serua callida*, representing the lower classes and their simpler, more cheerful worldview in a parody of the nobler characters' actions and words, as well as society's standards for love, honor, relationships, and even language. António Barata (1985, 559) stresses the fact that the roles of *graciosos* in the operas create a certain kind of social equality in the relationship between master and servant: while they parody the speech of the upper classes, they reinforce that same speech. In a peculiar way, Cornucópia represents the view that love and honor are fit only for the nobler characters (cf. the scene in which Mercúrio and Saramago fight for her, her fake fainting spell, and the various ridiculous comments and actions by the two male characters in the scene). Her role, however, is crucial, as is Saramago's, because, being *graciosos*, analogous to Plautine *serui callidi*, they make the plot advance, or, in Barata's words, "build the fundamental structure which allows for the development of the plot" (1985, 595). This same critic reminds us that Cornucópia is like a shadow of Alcmena, her popular version, a kind of parodic image of the mistress (472). He goes even further in considering Cornucópia a copy of Juno as well, since she is also a betrayed wife. The maidservant is thus central to the plot, the comic and cunning double of the tragic duo Alcmena and Juno.

Íris is also a figure of contradictory roles: though she is the goddess/nymph of *concordia*, she only brings *discordia* and chaos, in complete awareness of her special knowledge of Júpter and Mercúrio's disguises. She plays with the lower male characters Saramago and Mercúrio—who is here a mere servant, very different from the domineering Mercury in Plautus, *architectus dolis* and *auctor* at the same time—by manipulating them in an effort to help her mistress Juno. Íris takes the initiative in her subplots to seduce Saramago/Mercúrio, acting on her own, without being ordered by Juno. Like Cornucópia, she makes constant use of *blanda verba* and *logos-pharmakon* to soothe Juno's suffering and to calm her jealous rage whenever she can. In this sense, she is Cornucópia's double, besides being her rival. Nonetheless, she does not play the role of *graciosa*: she is a new goddess in disguise, and in this way a female Mercúrio. She is witty and, even though she accepts the game of seduction proposed by Saramago, also chastises him with commonsense morality: "Does a married man have no fear of God? Does he dare to trouble an unmarried woman?" (131). Her role is also structural, allowing for the complex doubling of the love triangle among the lower characters (Corradin 1998, 172): consequently, on the one hand, we have Júpter-Alcmena-Anfitrião,

but, on the other hand, we have not only Mercúrio-Cornucópia-Saramago, but also Saramago/Mercúrio-Íris-Cornucópia, by which the plot is multiplied.

Before dealing with the true protagonist of Silva's opera, I wish to say a few words about Alcmena, the evident protagonist of part 1. Her nature as a *matrona* is distinct from that of Plautus's Alcmena. The Portuguese version of the tragic wife mistreated by her husband and courted by a wanton god is very different from her Roman counterpart. The Roman Alcmena sings the praise first of *virtus*, male virtue, in defense of the basic Roman ideals of (male) nobility, emphasizing *libertas, salus, vita, res et parentes, patria et prognati* (*Amph.* 650), or else *pudicitiam et pudorem et sedatam cupidinem* and her true dowry of virtues, while at the same time declaring lustful passion for Jupiter when he first exits (*Amph.* 499–544). The Lusitanian tragic Alcmena (already portrayed in this manner by Camões) is much more submissive and sings the praise of *saudades*. The ridiculous manner in which she accepts Júpiter's apology is echoed in her stunning reconciliation with Anfitrião, after much offensive behavior, including death threats, by him. Her fainting spells only reinforce her characterization as a *discreta*, full of love and submission, a paragon of the mild and melancholy upper-class Portuguese woman (as distinct from the cheerful Cornucópia, for example). She can be saved from execution only by Júpiter's final act of compassion. Corradin (1998, 174) draws parallels between the play and the Christian Mary.²⁹ Corradin reminds us of the fact that Hercules's birth is only announced at the end, in a way of approximating Alcmena and Mary.³⁰ Her submissive and forgiving nature in both Camões and Silva can be seen as a complex interaction of the way pagan and Christian myths treat divine conception. For David Konstan, "we cannot thereby treat the Jupiter who acts within the play itself as a just god. Male and female are at best equal, and more likely Juno is morally superior: this is, then, the poet's way of installing the feminine on the level of the divine. Could this be a Jew's way of invoking, and at the same time parodying, the divine role of Mary in Christianity?"³¹

As Silva's own creation (possibly based on the version by Gasparini and Pariati), Juno is first and foremost aligned with modernity and its institutions; it is through her agency that prospects of imprisonment and public execution materialize and threaten the lives of the human protagonists. Juno's metatheatrical "machinery of revenge" thus translates into a machinery of arbitrary justice, reflecting the realities of the absolute power of the Holy Office. The goddess is also a metatheatrical figure whose intervention moves the plot of *Anfitrião* away from the Plautine comedy of errors toward a darker, more complex tale about the arbitrariness of the judicial system. Juno's power lies not in direct confrontation but in her puppeteer-like ability to manipulate the other characters and to disguise her personal revenge as a spectacle of justice. Silva makes a point of demonstrating Juno's

inability to confront her husband's power directly or to commit murder by her own hands. Her cruelty is thoughtless and casual; she makes occasional gestures of compassion, but only in order to make the scene of Alcmena's execution even darker. If Júpiter's masculine power is direct and overwhelming, Juno's feminine power is enacted through secret dealings behind the stage. It is her mastery of deception that effects her triumph; Júpiter cannot overpower his wife in her own domain. She is driven by jealousy, the driving force of the whole opera; she is the puppeteer in control of the strings of Tirésias, who represents earthly power, of Júpiter, who represents divine power, and of Anfitrião, Alcmena, and Saramago, mere objects of her insatiable thirst for revenge.

Given Silva's efforts to stress the contrast between Júpiter's and Juno's relationships to power, it is reasonable to ask what perceptions of gender and authority the play conveys. The god's absolute power is driven by desire and trumps everything else. Though he is capable of deception, as evident when he takes on Anfitrião's form and testifies against him, Júpiter's authority is accompanied by random gestures of kindness, as when he restores Saramago's human form, and a strong sense of justice, as when the god reveals his identity in order to prevent Alcmena's death, ultimately an act of salvaging the comic generic status of the play. Also, he has just satisfied his lust with her and has no reason to see her punished; this is his own implicit revenge on Juno. The goddess's power is in a sense inferior and operates through deceit, manipulation, and bribery. It could, however, prevail and lead to death and destruction, if not finally opposed by Jupiter acting as *deus ex machina*. On the other hand, she is the driving force of this innovative rewriting of Plautus. Even if she is not completely successful in carrying out her revenge and converting the comic plot to a fully developed tragedy, her powers confer on her the status of the true *architecta* of the opera. Without resorting to easy allegorical equivalents, it is reasonable to read Silva's portrayal of the divine couple as a commentary on the nature of absolute power, power that at its most deceitful and most whimsical is represented as female.

Furthermore, Anfitrião and Juno both play the role of the spurned spouse: his wife is seduced; her husband does the seducing; both are driven by jealousy. Thus, Jupiter gets his match: he cannot get away with befuddling mortals, since Juno possesses metatheatrical abilities, sees through him, and tries to stop him. The divine realm is thus itself riven, part of it occupied by a female figure who confounds the impunity of male aggression. In spite of her own baser motives, she introduces a balance among the gods. She acts as the antidote to the doubling effect by hindering Júpiter in his adventures through doubling, but her actions result in the multiplication of doubling: by usurping the position of main character, she takes half the play to herself in a doubling of the plot; she is a double to

Alcmena, to Anfitrião, to Cornucópia, and to Júpiter, while Íris doubles Mercúrio and Cornucópia (not to mention the structural doubling of upper-lower character sequences). The goddess is, then, a force creating many levels and instances of doubles, but also acting as opposition to the main doubling of Júpiter and Mercúrio. Jupiter is no paradigm of virtue, and Juno's position may seem, at least early on, to be morally justified. Only at the very end, when he drops his stage persona and assumes the role of dramatist, does Júpiter show his moral superiority by putting an end to Juno's revenge machine.

In conclusion, Juno's presence and role as protagonist undercuts the male domination of the heavens through an equipotent female opposition, actually capable of blocking Jupiter's moves, a divine female counterforce to his authoritarian selfish acts. Juno's actual triumph, the tragic consequences of her driving the main action, can only be prevented by a Júpiter who reminds us of Molière's king at the end of *Tartuffe*,³² the only force capable of solving the ties of a complex comedy leaning toward the tragic in a plot dominated by a multipotent hypocrite, also a religious fanatic.³³

NOTES

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1. "New Christians" were descendants of the Jews and the Moors who were forcibly converted to Christianity in late fifteenth-century Portugal. The term stands in opposition to "Old Christians," those free from any trace of Jewish blood (cf. Pereira 2007, 19–20; and Perkins 2004, 10–27, whose lengthy and impressive introduction to her translation of the *Cretan Labyrinth* by Silva is the most detailed and extensive study of Antônio José's life and works published in English).

2. Thereafter he could never divulge what happened to him in prison, and he would have to lead an openly Christian life. Cf. Silveira's analysis of the documentation on the practices of the Inquisition (1992, 27–53); see also the thorough discussion found in Barata 1985, 133–69; Perkins 2004, 10–27; and Pereira 2007.

3. Cf. Silveira 1992; Barata 1985; and Perkins 2004, 45–46.

4. The discovery of the authorship of the operas was only made by Inocêncio Francisco da Silva in 1858, when he deciphered the acrostic poem written in two *décimas*, ten-line stanzas, introduced by Ameno in the 1744 edition, which reads "Antonio Joseph da Silva."

5. For more detailed discussions on sources, models, and general characteristics of the genre, see Perkins 2004, 87–101; Barata 1985, 178–79, 209–11, 349–404; Pereira 2007, 27–29; and Silveira 1992, 141–77.
6. Some scholars, such as Barata (1985, 210) and Perkins (2004, 101), mention it briefly.
7. Juno is portrayed as a jealous goddess in the prologue of Rotrou's *Les deux Sosies*, but she does not appear in the remaining portions of the play (cf. Lindberger 1956, 99).
8. In Pariati's prologue, he states: "Fra' personaggi da me introdotti quello de *Giunone* si è'l principale: Deità di sua natura gelosa e implacabile; e da me portata a tal segno d'ingiusta e furiosa passione" (Among the characters introduced by me, that of Juno is the main one: Goddess of a jealous and restless nature, and led to be a sign of unjust and violent passion) (Gasparini and Pariati 1707, 8).
9. Silva does not, however, follow Pariati's initiative of making Giunone disguise herself both as princess Dorida and as a gentleman named Eurimene.
10. Barata (1985, 210) discusses the possible influences for Silva's opera, mentioning Molière and Pariati, but dismisses both as important models. Perkins (2004, 47) also mentions that Antonio Teixeira, the composer who worked with Antônio José, was probably a student of Alessandro and Domenico Scarlatti, precursors of the composers of Italian eighteenth-century opera, as well as a student of Gasparini. Dryden's *Amphitryon or the Two Sosias*, another operatic treatment of the myth of the birth of Hercules, with music by Henry Purcell, is also excluded as a possible model by Barata (1985, 211n2).
11. Cf. Corradin 1998, 170–72.
12. I use Krummrich's translation (Silva 2010), referring to characters by their Portuguese names (in quotations they are referenced in accordance with Krummrich's orthography).
13. The scene is very similar to one in Camões 1980 (*Auto* vv. 212–66). Silva 2010, 23; henceforth, I cite only the page number in Krummrich's translation.
14. Júpiter and Alcmena are characterized as *discretos*, a type of upper-class pompous character found in Baroque and Spanish golden age theater, as opposed to the *gracioso*, usually a character of the lower class, who is talkative, deceitful, and witty, as represented here by the pair of servants Saramago and Cornucópia (cf. Barata 1985, 565–603).
15. *Saudade* can be found as an entry in Barbara Cassin's *Vocabulaire Européen des Philosophies: Dictionnaire des Intraduisibles*. It can be described as a specific Portuguese Brazilian kind of nostalgia or yearning for people, things, or places considered lost or too far off, or, in Fernando Santoro's words, "le sentiment clef de l'âme portugaise" (the key element of the Portuguese soul) (Cassin 2004, 1115).
16. Cf. *Amph.* 633–53 for a similar speech by Alcmena.
17. On women in Roman comedy, see Dutsch 2008, chap. 2; on *logos-pharmakon* in the sophistic speech of Gorgias's *Encomium of Helen* more broadly, see Cassin 1995, chap. 1.
18. See note 13 above.
19. See note 13 above.
20. Cf. *Amph.* vv. 67–854.

21. Some critics, such as Silveira (1992, 137, 153), assume that this is a veiled reference to D. João V, not only with respect to the absolutist nature of his reign but also with respect to his frequent extramarital escapades. This could be considered the only significant contemporary allusion in the opera (besides the prison in part 2, scene 6), and there is some debate concerning whether this could have been one of the causes of Silva's execution.

22. Juno's offer is possibly an echo of Dido's offer to Aeneas in *Aeneid* II, just as Tirésias seems to echo Odysseus in *Od.* VI.243 when he says he is incapable of knowing whether Juno is a woman or a goddess (145).

23. Cf. *Amph.* 882–955.

24. Camões' *Auto* uses a similar device (vv. 1319–23), which causes Alcmena not only to forgive Júpiter but even to assume the whole blame and apologize to him.

25. I am grateful to David Konstan for bringing that particular point to my attention.

26. Cf. Silveira's (1992, 27–53) discussion of the two trials of Antônio José, especially 44–47, where he discusses the testimonies of two Dominican friars in his second trial, who testified in favor of Silva on account of his apparent conversion to Catholicism after his first trial, and the answers of the Inquisitors, who could not take his external Catholic appearance into consideration because they could not really know his internal feelings and intentions.

27. The jail is called *limoeiro*, the name of a famous prison in Lisbon, in what is probably another biographical reference.

28. Some editions, such as the one proposed by Barata (1985, vol. 2), introduce an eighth scene at this point in the play. Barata, who proposes a synoptic edition comparing the *Anfitrião* edited by Ameno in 1744 with another contemporary manuscript called *A dama enganada pelo esposo fingido* (A woman fooled by the pretended husband), proposes this title as the one Silva intended for the opera, particularly for its ambiguity: not only is Alcmena fooled by a trickster, but also by Juno herself, possibly the major character.

29. So also Konstan, personal communication.

30. Even if it is impossible to know exactly whether Silva knew it, Johannes Burmeister's *Mater-Virgo* had already done the same in a very explicit Christian inversion of *Amphitruo*. Cf., e.g., Fontaine (2015).

31. Konstan, personal communication.

32. I am also grateful to David Konstan for pointing out the possible similarities between the endings of the two plays. Silva's acknowledgment of *Tartuffe* is probable given that his *Anfitrião* draws directly on Molière's.

33. Possible political allusions relating Júpiter to D. João V and the nature of power in the play to the Inquisition are intensely debated in Silva scholarship, and I refer the interested reader to Barata 1985; Silveira 1992; Perkins 2004; and Pereira 2007 and the polemic discussions therein.

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